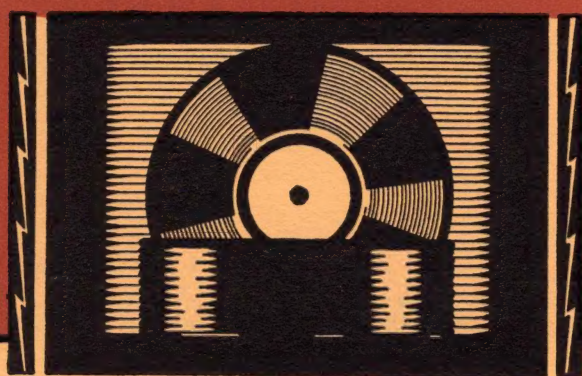


The

JUNE, 1937

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AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER



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EDITED BY PETER HUGH REED

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The American Music Lover

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EDITORIAL

NEARLY eleven thousand miles in five weeks is a strenuous trip, but in the cause of music surely a worthwhile one. In our recent tour ahead of the Philadelphia Orchestra, which officially started on April 13 and ended on May 19, we covered some thirty-six states and stopped in twenty-seven cities.

At this time, we want to thank all those whom we met on this tour, and thank them for their individual and collective cooperation and good will. Our memory is keen, and the names and faces of the many readers and friends we met en route are still with us. If it were physically possible we would like to write each and every one, but since it is not, we extend our greetings and hope that we may meet them all again in the near future, and on a similar mission.

An article relative to the tour will be forthcoming, but this will have to be postponed to another issue.

At this time, we wish also to state how gratified we were by the wide interest shown in good music. The standard of musical appreciation in this country is higher now than ever before, and the peak has not by any means been reached. The work being done in musical appreciation and in participation in music in the high schools and colleges throughout the country is unquestionably helping to lift the standard of musical appreciation, and, of course, radio and recorded music are also greatly contributing to that end.

When we stop and think about a sponsored tour like that recently made by the Philadelphia Orchestra, we are greatly gratified to realize that the opportunity to hear such an outstanding symphonic organization was given to the people by a leading commercial organization. The fact

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Francis Liszt, the Romantic — as a young man.

Liszt's Legacy of Song

By ARTHUR WILLIAM WOLF

IN retrospect we find that the Liszt Year, 1936, with its many and varied Liszt festivals held throughout the world to commemorate the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the composer's birth and the fiftieth anniversary of his death, has brought to light new and interesting aspects of Liszt's importance in the musical world — not as a propagator of other men's creations, not as the unexcelled virtuoso (which, after all, is important only historically), not as a pedagogue, but as a composer and as a generator of musical ideas that influenced to some degree the works of many of his contemporaries.

Liszt, the composer of music that has been controversial almost since its inception, has been held in varying degrees of esteem by musical society in different parts of the world. One thing that was observed during the Liszt Year is that apparently the composer's oft-expressed love for the land of his birth is still unrequited. To be sure, his native country made a feeble effort to honor him, but this effort was almost entirely confined to teaching English speaking people that Liszt's christian name was not *Franz*, but *Francis*. Truly a most exhausting task!

Yet Liszt's country did honor him, and with the finest festival of all. For the truth of the matter is that if Liszt were alive today he would be an Austrian and not an Hungarian! The explanation of this lies in the fact that since the Treaty of Trianon, the region in which Liszt was born has been made a part of Austria, and Eisenstadt, the principle city of that area, was the scene this past summer of a notable festival. There a monument to the composer was unveiled and the Vienna Philharmonic under Felix Weingartner performed Liszt music, including the *E Minor Piano Concerto* with Moritz Rosenthal as soloist.

In America Liszt was honored more extensively than elsewhere. Through the untiring efforts of Miss Meda Lynn, secretary of the now disbanded Hungarian-American Society — which did so much to acquaint Americans with Hungarian art and culture — universities, music schools, musical societies and other cultural groups throughout the land were made "Liszt-conscious" and Liszt programs were planned and given with the greatest of enthusiasm. To Miss Lynn also goes the credit for the all-Liszt programs presented by almost every major symphony orchestra in the United States.

But with all the revivals of the orchestral works, choral works and solo instrument pieces, it is a matter for profound regret that the compositions which are infused with the unadulterated essence of his genius — his songs — should still be ignored and relatively little known.

Biographers of Liszt have, for the most part, touched sparingly on his songs. In a well known American edition of collected songs by Liszt, the editor in his foreword devotes over four pages to a discussion of the composer's life and instrumental works, and barely one page to the songs! Indeed the reference to these is but cursory and superficial.

Even Grove's Dictionary omits Liszt's name as one of the great contributors to the field of song. And yet it cannot be contested that as a writer of *Lieder* he is the true link between Schubert and the moderns.

I shall not contend that every Liszt song is a masterpiece. Such a contention would be absurd; but I do maintain that the majority of his songs, especially the German *Lieder*, compare favorably with the greatest masterpieces of the lyric art.

Any dispassionate discussion of a composer's work must necessarily preclude fetishism. And if I speak in glowing terms about the songs in this article, it must be borne in mind that I am concerned here only with those works that are of undeniable merit. The rest, whatever their points of weakness or value, have no place here. They detract no more from Liszt than does the *Triple Concerto* of Beethoven or certain parts of Wagner's *Rienzi* detract from their composers.

Liszt, cosmopolitan that he was, wrote songs not only to German words, but also to French, Italian, Hungarian and even English texts. Yet his German *Lieder* represent the best of his works in this form.

With him the *Lied* acquired a new, vital symphonic accompaniment that reflects faithfully the mood, the *Stimmung*, of the text. In this respect he was Hugo Wolf's great model.

By the use of declamatory or quasi-recitative passages and the introduction of short but important themes which he transforms again and again to suit the mood of the poem, the composer opened up entirely new possibilities in art song literature.

Liszt inclined naturally toward the declamatory style, to the emphasizing of the word-expression, as in *Tristesse*. In his settings of Victor Hugo's *Comment disaient — ils, Oh! quand je dors, S'il est un charmant gazon*, and in *Kling' leise, mein Lied*, we discover his use of the Italian *fermata* to intensify and heighten the effect. The interpretation of these songs demands an uncommonly well developed vocal technic and this in itself probably accounts in no small way for the infrequency of their performance today.

Der Koenig von Thule, Ich moechte hingehn, Die Lorelei, and *Die drei Zigeuner* also reveal the declamatory style to a great degree, but in these, especially in the latter two, he breaks away entirely from all previous conceptions of form in song writing.

Die Lorelei, one of the greatest songs of all time and one that has not suffered the neglect that its fellows have, strangely enough displays Liszt's one weakness in *Lied* writing: his proneness to use tiresome repetitions of verbal phrases. The reiteration of the words *und das hat mit ihrem singen*,

die Lorelei die Lorelei gethan, dissipates the force of the melodic treatment and weakens the emotional effect of the song as a whole.

Those who are forever seeking the sensational and the ostentatious so unfortunately manifest in much of Liszt's instrumental output will find little satisfaction in his songs. These works are the profound expressions of the composer's heart. They contain no irrelevant matter clothed in grandiose technical displays. Listen to *Wer nie sein Brot mit Traenen ass* or the lovely *Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh* or *Du bist wie eine Blume*, or the better known *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein*, and observe the simplicity, the lyric grace, the absence of effort, the almost Mozartian spontaneity.

The original accompaniments to several Liszt songs were so difficult as to be accessible only to virtuosi whose digital facility paralleled the composer's. These accompaniments were later simplified by Liszt on the advice of friends.

One of these songs, *Im Rhein, im schoenen Strome*, a lovely legato *Lied*, illustrates with forceful clarity, as do *Der du von dem Himmel bist*, *Das Veilchen*, and *Die Schluesselblumen*, the constant war that was waged between Liszt's artistic and religious natures.

The ineffable *Wieder moecht' ich* shows how he could achieve his noblest effects by purely melodic means. Liszt seldom used the strophic form but when he did he transcended the limits of the form with consummate artistry. Usually he introduced new melodic material towards the end of a song in order to build a fitting climax to the whole.

Arthur Friedheim once said that "The art of Liszt is not measurable by a passing glance." Especially is this true of his *Lieder*. A great deal of first-rate material can move alone on its own obvious and superficial merits; but these songs require a certain sensitiveness and a profundity of thought on the part of the interpreter. The songs cannot be projected by the usual type of concert singer that frequents the platform to-day — the so-called "artist" whose only sense of interpretation is that which has been "made" for him by his teacher or coach for each program. The singer of Liszt's songs must have, if we may borrow from Mme. de Stael, "learned something of life from the

poets." The singer must have an abundance of poetic feeling to sing such things as the glowing *In Liebeslust, Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen* or the exquisite *Vergiftet sind meine Lieder* if he is to project the mood-painting. The singer must feel and know the words of the poet, their implications, their subtleties, else he will never grasp Liszt's music.

Liszt was most fortunate in his choice of poets — Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Victor Hugo and on one occasion Tennyson.

Ludwig Rellstab, who wrote the text for the first half of Schubert's *Swan Songs*, furnished the poems for three Liszt *Lieder*: *Wo weilt er?*, the brilliant little *Nimm einen Strahl* and the overpowering *Es rauschen die Winde*. This last named song is to my mind the greatest of all the composer's *Lieder*. From the very first measure we recognize the tragic, hopeless element of the song, terrible in its implications. Reflective, elegiac in the beginning, its mood suddenly brightens, but this brightness is that of a pallid sun straining its rays through leaden clouds. The change is effected by a breath-taking bit of tone painting, surprising, bitterly beautiful.

But the mood is short lived. There is a pause; then suddenly we are thrust back into the minor key. The pale sun has disappeared altogether and overhead the clouds, like an angry grey ocean, rush in wild billows, while the fierce autumnal wind, cold and relentless, sweeps and blights all before it. The agitated sestoles in the accompaniment against the words, *Kalt ueber die Huegel rauscht, Winde, dahin*, have an unforgettable effect. The final repeated words, *dahin, dahin* reach the depths of hopeless despair.

Rellstab's poem is not a word-picture of some equinoctial storm; it tells us of the "winds of fate" that drive even love before them like a dead leaf. This poem might have been written by any one of a dozen poets — Thomas Hardy for instance, for the words certainly are Hardian in their philosophical connotations. Yes, others might have written the poem. Only Liszt could have written the music!

After this tremendous song how lovely and soothing is the delicate and expressive *Lasst*

mich ruhen. In this setting of Fallersleben's words Liszt has captured the very essence of the German poem. The ravishing melody, the refined accompaniment played almost always *una corda*, make this song a rare gem. The final *perdendo* in the piano after the voice has ceased is unspeakably beautiful. Hugo Wolf must have loved this song. Richard Strauss must cherish it.

In only one song does Liszt give us something of the legendary virtuoso who in the tempestuousness of his instrumental works often sweeps us to a pinnacle of dizzy heights only to leave us suddenly, hanging on for dear life, to get down again as best we may. In this *Lied*, *Der Alpenjaeger*, the composer gives us a thrilling picture of the hunter, dauntless amid glaciers and snow, faring ever onward in the thunder and lightning of the mountain tops while the cities of men lie far below, hidden by an "ocean of sky".

The climax of this song does not come at the end, but takes place some seventeen measures before. The remainder of the *Lied*, over a *tremolo* accompaniment, is a reflective postlude taken up finally by the piano alone in a rushing *crescendo* and ending in crashing, tumultuous chords.

Liszt in later years made orchestral arrangements of the accompaniments to several of his songs. The last music he wrote down, we are told, was such an arrangement for his powerful ballad, *Die Vaetergruft*, which really demands the color that only an orchestra can give. One of the recording companies could certainly contribute much to music lovers by recording this work. A bass of the highest order, like Alexander Kipnis, or Paul Bender (Chaliapin would be my first choice if his German diction were better), could make a record that would be a valuable addition to any collection.

I have high hopes that these marvelous songs will yet attain the niche they so justly deserve in the estimation of the musical world. Nothing so great as these can remain indefinitely in obscurity. These songs, "this priceless hoard" as Hugo Wolf collectively termed them, must at last rise above prejudice.

Seven Pianists

By NEVILLE d'ESTERRE

I. Paderewski

EVER since he relinquished public life and returned to the concert platform, the critics have made a special business of discovering all the defects in Paderewski's art. Their attitude is natural, but of no significance. It is the business of the critic to show that every god has feet of clay. Paderewski was cutting too big a figure; and so it was necessary for the critics to show him up as a bit of a charlatan.

The reply of Paderewski was to go on playing. It was the best reply he could possibly have made.

His sensational *debut* was made about half a century ago; and the sensation he created was not due only to his picturesque appearance, for it was usual for eminent musicians to wear long manes in those days — the Beethoven tradition. The reputation of the young Paderewski was made almost at once. Nothing like him had been known since the early days of Liszt. There was an astonishing technique, and an equally amazing control of tone; and, added to this, was a daring inventiveness in the matter of interpretation, and yet, behind it, and justifying it, a manifestly deep understanding of the greatest music. Such was Paderewski, the artist, in those days; and Paderewski has never changed: as he was when his rivals were D'Albert and Raoul Pugno, so he has remained in recent years, when Schnabel and Horowitz have had to be reckoned with.

His faults may be expressed in a single word — vulgarity. Always Paderewski has tended to assert himself in his playing: sometimes, indeed, with charming or profoundly moving results, but at other times rather vexatiously. Most of us who are well acquainted with his art have observed that

strain of bombast and sentimentality running through it; and I think the clue may be discovered in his own compositions, which are the simple and straightforward expression of himself, and of his inward reactions to the art of music. His manner of playing the *Soirées de Vienne*, or the second waltz of Chopin, is the manner of the man whose self-expression takes the form of the *Cracovienne Fantastique* and the *Polish Fantasia*. The other fault upon which the critics have enlarged — his portentousness — is neither here nor there; it has never affected his playing. The secret of his art, and hence of his reputation, is vitality. Music under his hands is a living thing. There is no doubt in my mind that, with all his faults, he is one of the greatest executive artists in the history of music.

II. Rosenthal

Here is a man of wit and wisdom, who expresses these things to us in terms of music. Moriz Rosenthal is one of the few surviving pupils of Franz Liszt. His technique is the kind of thing which has to be experienced to be believed. It took the breath away forty years ago, and in his old age it is unimpaired. But, within him, it has always been the servant, not the master, of the artist. He has never been a self-advertising pianist, and his career has been associated with no vulgar sensations; but throughout that career he has been the equal of the greatest of them all. And, like Paderewski, he has set himself no limits, whether through pride or prejudice. No specialist in Bach has ever surpassed Rosenthal in the power of adapting the works of that master to an instrument for which they were never written. He takes Beethoven *en passant*, and reveals his soul as clearly as anybody who has made an exclusive study of Beethoven. No living pianist plays Chopin and Schumann better than he does, and there

is no modernist more perfectly at home with modern music. His touch is elemental — it suggests things like sunshine, and fire, and wind, and rain. There is not the slightest suggestion in it of machinery at work — not even in his terrific fortissimos.

He is, in my opinion, the greatest living master of rhythm. I am quite unable to explain why I think so. The reader, to understand what I mean, must hear Rosenthal play.

III. Cortot

The art of Alfred Cortot presents us with a paradox: for he is both austere and capricious. This austerity and this capriciousness are not distinct and separate moods of his, which appear at different times. They are united in his art; the reason being, I suppose, that his feeling for music is objective and subjective in equal proportions. He impresses me, also, as being singularly immune from the perils of idolatry — no respecter of persons or of names. All this is surmise on my part; but it seems to me that music is definitely a language to Cortot, and that he esteems it, irrespective of its origin, as it is noble, gracious and eloquent. He has, perhaps, a prejudice for the romantic in music; but, subject to that limitation, he displays a genius for selecting what is best in every phase and school of musical thought.

His austerity reveals itself in his touch, minutely delicate as it is. His capriciousness displays itself in strikingly unorthodox readings, particularly in the matter of *tempo*. Such readings are stimulating enough when the subject matter is the music of Schumann or Liszt; but we find ourselves shaking our heads sometimes when the older classics are under discussion. I, for one, cannot believe Cortot's ideas about the *Moonlight Sonata* correspond at all closely to Beethoven's.

But Cortot is more than a solo pianist. He is a conductor — one of the few conductors who can look Bach in the face, and live. And as an *ensemble* pianist he has had no superior within living memory; he takes rank there with Busoni, and Raoul Pugno, and Harold Bauer. When he is associated with Thibaud in a violin sonata, or with Thibaud and Casals in a trio, another and, I think, a greater Cortot is before us, less austere than the soloist, and decidedly less capricious. All of which goes to show that the laws which ordinary men must obey, or perish, have no application to genius.

IV. Backhaus

There is a professor at Oxford, whose undergraduate career was such as to earn for him the appellation of *Proxime accessit*. He is known to this day as *Proxime accessit C*—. For all the great prizes which the University bestows upon its most brilliant sons, this gentleman was always the runner-up, with somebody else an inch, or a hair's breadth ahead of him.

The same enviable position belongs to Wilhelm Backhaus among the great masters of the piano. Backhaus is versatile; he plays everything from the severest old classics, to the most twiddly, superficial, post-romantic stuff. And he plays everything well — that is to say in a revealing manner, which sets forth both the character and the value of the music he is playing. You can learn everything worth knowing about pianoforte music, just from hearing Backhaus play it, whether it be Bach transcribed, or Beethoven, or particularly strong in his interpretations of Chopin, or Liszt, or Tschaikowsky. He is Brahms. And he never stumbles over rhythm, because he always plays with understanding, by which I mean the complete and balanced comprehension of the music. Rhythmic errors arise chiefly from not seeing the wood for the trees. Backhaus simply does not make them, but approaches every work upon Flaubert's principle: *L'homme c'est rien; l'œuvre c'est tout*.

Yet I have always the feeling when I hear him (which I do as often as I can) that, whatever kind of music he is playing, there is somebody else who renders that particular music a little better than he does.

I can turn Backhaus on at will when I am at home, in Beethoven's *G major Concerto*; and how noble is his performance on the whole! But I do not like his cadenza in the first movement. I like it no better than I should like an interpolation of C. S. Calverley in the first book of Virgil's "Aeneid." The intention is excellent — to salve the cadenza from its revolting abuse at the hands of the popular virtuosi of the nineteenth century; but the result reminds me painfully of Villiers Stanford's efforts to express himself in the manner of Brahms. The truth is that nobody can breathe virtue into that carcass, the *ad lib* cadenza. And another truth is that nobody can speak in Beethoven's language.

V. Schnabel

Like Vladimir de Pachmann, Artur Schnabel works within narrow limits. Pachmann avoided the older classics, save for rare (and refreshing) communings with Mozart, and occasional hints to the public that he knew more about Bach than was generally supposed. His sanctuary was Chopin; and serious people (solemn triflers in other words) thought him rather a frivolous artist for that reason. When he gave Chopin a rest, it was usually to pass an idle hour with Weber, and Henselt, and Liszt, and Raff. The world of Beethoven and Brahms hardly knew Pachmann.

The world of Beethoven and Brahms is the world of Artur Schnabel. If he strays beyond its frontiers, it is merely into the region of "related subjects" — Mozart, Schubert (the little-known Schubert of the sonatas), Schumann, Dvorák. The *salon* music of Chopin he does not touch — at any rate, in public. That he should ever play Liszt seems as improbable as that John Gielgud should take the lead in a Lonsdale comedy. A very austere figure he cuts in the musical world—but (and it is a big *but*) he does not include Bach in his concert repertory.

Let me state my opinion straight away. Schnabel plays Beethoven better than any other living pianist. And nobody plays Brahms better than he does. As for Schubert, he is the only pianist (now that Borwick is gone) who ever gives us any Schubert that is worth hearing. But I wish he would descend from the clouds and play those things of Chopin which are great music — I mean pieces like the *E minor Ballade*, the *Fantasia*, and the *E minor Scherzo*. They are quite worthy of him, and, indeed, of any musician in the wide world. He would never mishandle Chopin, as Busoni did, because almost alone among the pianists of today, he has the Pachmann touch and technique, the Pachmann feeling for the piano. I believe that if Schnabel played Chopin's music in public, he would play it better than anybody else. I hold that belief because I have heard him in the *adagio* movement of Beethoven's great sonata in E flat. Which is not such a *non sequitur* as it looks.

VI. Rachmaninoff

I have heard it stated that Rachmaninoff "plays like a book". I daresay he does; but

it is as well to remember that there are books and books. The book in this case is not a modern book; it was written, I should say, about 1894 for the edification of a Monday "Pop" audience at the old St. James's Hall. In short, when you hear Rachmaninoff play at one of his recitals, you hear just the kind of interpretations which the best pianists offered to the public in the "yellow nineties." The outlook of this master upon music is *fin de siècle*; so also in his execution. The old distinction is drawn between the classical and the romantic; the old custom is observed of seizing every opportunity for an exhibition of downright brilliance. Beethoven's *Appassionata* under the hands of Rachmaninoff is a glorious cascade — which is probably what Beethoven intended *when he began to compose it*. Whether Beethoven adhered to that intention, as the sonata developed, is another matter. And Rachmaninoff characteristically takes the second movement at a quicker tempo than we are accustomed to hear nowadays. It was generally so played forty years ago.

His art as an executant belongs, in short, to the same period as his art as a composer. He came to the front at that time, and the phase in which he found himself set its stamp upon him. To say so, however, is no disparagement. The final decade of the nineteenth century happened to be a great moment for music. It opened with the superb valedictory utterances of Verdi and Brahms; it continued with *Till Eulenspiegel* and *L'après midi*, and *La Bohème*; it ended with the *Enigma Variations* and the Ravel *Quartet*. And it was the day of Ysaye, and Busoni, and Jean de Reszke, and Felix Mottl. If you wish to know what they thought then of Beethoven, and Chopin, and Liszt, you have merely to hear Rachmaninoff play the works of those composers; and, if you wish to hear the authentic musical voice of that decade, you have merely to hear Rachmaninoff play his own compositions. It was altogether a more fruitful and artistic phase than that which followed it — from 1900 to 1920.

I like to hear Rachmaninoff's views on music, as expressed on the keyboard. If he misses a good deal that his successors have discovered, he also preserves much that they have lost. And his execution is of that masterful sort which words are hopeless to describe. No pianist was ever more thoroughly master of his medium.

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The Tragic Note

In Mozart's E Flat Symphony

By NATHAN BRODER

I.

THE passionate melancholy of Mozart's great *G minor Symphony* is now generally recognized, except by a recalcitrant conductor or two; but to many music lovers and conductors alike the *E flat*, its predecessor by a few weeks, is still untroubled in its serenity and joyousness. Yet there are sections in the latter work that, on historical and stylistic grounds, can be shown to be repercussions of personal emotional upheaval.

With the publication in 1906 of Alfred Heuss's article, *Das daemonische Element in Mozart's Werken*, a new era began in Mozart investigation. The gold leaf which had been so lovingly, if indiscriminately, applied to the master's life and works during the nineteenth century was now carefully scraped off. The scraping continues — with such

zeal, indeed, that a specialist has recently found it necessary to administer a gentle reproof to over-enthusiastic analysts: "I should like therefore to utter a mild warning against the somewhat romantic attempt to discern daemonic shadows in every change to the minor."

But much remains to be done in the way of tracking down the emotional implications of Mozart's instrumental music. At the present stage of research on the subject, we may speak with assurance only of certain broad effects. We cannot be sure what feelings, if any, are mirrored by a turn of a phrase here, or a harmonic progression there; but there are certain general devices about whose interpretation there can be little doubt.

For example, there are two sections in the *E flat Symphony* which are deeply pathetic in mood, passages that must have emanated from the depths of a greatly troubled soul.

II.

The first of these emotionally complex sections is the opening *Adagio*. Here the tell-tale device is the pregnant rhythm which sets in at measure 9 and continues unbroken through measure 21. That this rhythm was synonymous to Mozart with a mood of solemn tragedy is plainly seen in *Don Giovanni*, where, in a slightly different form, it accompanies almost all of the Statue's direful utterances. If that were the only other example of its use, we should agree with Abert that Mozart, when composing the symphony, was still under the sway of the powerful rhythms of his recently completed opera. But the intimate relationship between this rhythm and tragic emotions was more deeply rooted, for we find it in an aria for bass (*Così dunque tradisci*, K. 432) written four years before the composition of the opera. Here it accompanies the words, "I bear in my breast my own executioner. Wherever I wander, terror



A Picture of Mozart Made About the Time
He Wrote the E Flat Symphony

and dread will follow in my footsteps; my guilt will always confront me." There is a strikingly similar passage in Gluck's *Iphigenie en Tauride*. Whether Mozart originally borrowed the rhythm from Gluck, or perhaps from Handel, is of no great moment here. What is important is that in the only instances in all of Mozart's vocal music of the extended use of this rhythm in a slow tempo, he employs it as a tragic undertone to threats, of imminent destruction, in the case of the opera and of self-execution, in the aria.

In measure 18 of the *Adagio* the mood of tragedy is intensified by a biting dissonance. Two bars before, the music had begun to move toward the subdominant tonality, causing in measure 18 a harsh conjunction of the tones D-flat and C in the first and second violins. No attempt is made to mitigate the harshness of this dissonance; on the contrary, it is introduced with a sudden *forte*, and the clashing notes are both reinforced — the D-flat by the flute and first bassoon, and the C by first clarinet and second bassoon. The manuscript of the symphony reveals that Mozart's original plan was to give the second violin part (with the dissonant D-flat) to the stronger first violins, and the present first violin part to the seconds from measures 16 to 20 inclusive. But after writing it thus he reversed the parts, possibly in the interests of better voice-leading.

We must conclude from all this that the dissonance is not merely a fortuitous occurrence arising out of the harmonic exigencies of the passage, but an effect deliberately planned and satisfying some inner need.

III.

In the second section of the two mentioned above, the nature of the underlying emotions is again indicated by the choice of rhythm. The second theme of the *Andante con moto* (not simply *Andante*, as in all the pocket editions of the score) is a slashing motive in the first violins, with a syncopated accompaniment in the seconds and violas. It is with the syncopation that we are concerned.

The device of a syncopated accompaniment bore a definite emotional message to eighteenth-century audiences. Operatic composers of about the middle of the century had discovered its usefulness in situations requiring an agitated musical background. By the time Mozart arrived on the scene, the device had been assiduously exploited by Majò,

Traetta, Galuppi, Gluck, Piccinni, Benda, Paisiello, Salieri, Sacchini and others; it was common currency, almost a cliché. Mozart adopted this commonplace and, as he did with many others, made of it an effective and highly individual element of his style. Although his early vocal works betray a rather indiscriminate use of syncopation, it becomes with *Idomeneo* a rhythmic pattern which the mature Mozart, with his unerring instinct for the psychological aptness of such a device, employed only in situations of extreme agitation, fear, desperation, horror, and related emotions.

With these facts in mind let us return to the second subject in the *Andante* of our symphony. The passionate character of the violin motive, the conflict between the regular pulse of the basses and the syncopation, and the sensitiveness of the sixth step (F minor) in the fundamental tonality, all combine to express a mood very different from the gentle, romantic, idyllic one usually ascribed to this movement.

With regard to the symphony as a whole, there remains to be added the fact, recently pointed out by a German scholar, that Mozart frequently employed the keys of E-flat and A-flat in his vocal works to depict "sorrow," "bitter disillusion," "pain at parting," "longing for death" and "secret, dark, sinister" scenes.

IV.

The foregoing remarks raise a question that has long occupied commentators: Was there any relationship between Mozart's everyday existence and his inner, creative life? Were the emotions aroused by his misfortunes in any way related to the emotions we can trace in his instrumental music? The tendency in recent years has been to follow Abert, who wrote, in his analysis of the E-flat symphony:

We see here quite clearly how little the world of phantasy which was Mozart's real world, had to do with the everyday sphere and its troubles. It did not enter his mind to "set to music" the distress of his outer life and, as the popular expression has it, "to write from his soul." Even the *G minor Symphony* has nothing to do

(Continued on Page 57)

The Solitary Bach

By JOHN MELVILLE HOWARD

(Editor's Note: Here are some interesting thoughts engendered by many hearings of the works of Bach, from a musical amateur with whose previous contributions our readers are familiar.)

IT may at first seem paradoxical to say the "solitary" Bach. We do not ordinarily consider a man solitary who has married twice and has twenty children running about the house. But of course that is hardly fair, being a development of time. I believe that Bach maintained to the end of his days the personal reserve of his youth. It is to be accepted on authority that the Bach family covered a good part of Germany and that Johann Sebastian was a family man, but we have scant data on his social activities away from his own hearth. For lack of evidence we must conclude that they were limited. Judging solely by his long and consistent productivity up to the time of his blindness, he was first to last wrapped up in his work — a sincere artist.

But my title is misleading in a more important sense: Bach was religious. As many know from experience, a man may be quite alone in the crowds of a great city, or he may feel solitary though he has many friends. A man with the faith of a Bach is rare today; and probably such a one would not often experience the sensation referred to. If it had bothered Bach we should find him turning from his isolation and seeking friends.

My title, however, derives chiefly from a consideration of his music itself; that is, its lofty rank and its outward austerity.

Inwardly, or spiritually, there is the fervent exaltation to which we respond emotionally. We should not call it tenderness; it is much more. It is joy sometimes or resignation or supplication, but almost always transcendental, beyond everyday concerns.

This is not true, of course, regarding much of the lighter music which he wrote, and it might be best to approach his great works through the delightful melodies of his suites, concertos and sonatas. But even the lightest pieces have a technical excellence which may

be forbidding unless we let ourselves go and do not try to grasp the design. After we have heard it several times in a completely receptive state it will no longer seem arbitrary.

The same advice applies to his more ambitious works: the masses, passions, fugues, choral preludes. For to appreciate Bach we must allow him to raise us above our petty affairs of the day. He, unlike Beethoven and others, will not freely give himself whatever our state of mind. First there is the outward austerity of a form whose conventions we must accept; then there is the loftiness of conception which ignores even humor.

We need not be religious in the sense Bach was in order to understand his music, but we must relax our prejudices. It is much easier to say, "Bach is too cold," than, "I don't understand him, but I'm ready to listen." To get the fullest pleasure out of any good music requires some participation from the listener. Sympathy is a positive force, and initially, before he has become our good friend, Bach requires it aplenty.

Our haven is more uncertain than Bach's. It has not recently opened out its glories to Martin Luther's thunder. And sometimes present-day life is likely to seem a process of sophistication that draws us away from what some consider childish fears and faiths. So we may be reluctant to give over our convictions and listen to a true believer who happened also to be an artist and a man of intellect.

It may seem reasonable enough that we should feel a little superior (after all, we are twentieth century people!) but we can rest assured that Bach will take us nowhere we are unwilling to go. His faith is his constant joy, but he does not challenge ours or ask our acceptance of his. For him it was true; for his music it was true; therefore

let us interpret it anyway we please just so we feel the power and essential beauty of his music.

I take the liberty of quoting broken passages from Albert Schweitzer's learned "J. S. Bach." Speaking of objective artists, he says: "In them the artistic personality exists independently of the human, the latter remaining in the background as if it were something almost accidental. Bach's works would have been the same even if his existence had run quite another course Bach, indeed, is clearly not a single but a universal personality This genius was not an individual, but a collective soul. Centuries and generations have laboured at this work, before the grandeur of which we halt in veneration."

I do not entirely agree with Dr. Schweitzer that Bach the individual is not present in his music. If that were absolutely true we should have music as pure and formal as a church bell. And, I imagine, strictly personal emotion more than once impelled a new composition. We do not look on Bach as a machine or a monster, but a superior human being and artist.

He was the summing up and fruition of a musical epoch. After him, as after Wagner, the deluge! Musical development must change its course. Well, it has changed its course more than once. We have been blessed with Mozart's clean beauty and grace, Beethoven's great sympathy and power, Brahms' magnificence. But it is doubtful that a higher peak was ever reached than that on which Bach's finest works stand solitary and splendid, safe from time and fashion.

And today, in the midst of confusion, we are turning backward (or is it forward) to the solitary Bach for that type of consolation and reward that only the individual voice of the inspired recluse can give.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the editors of *The American Music Lover*.

I believe the Friends of Recorded Music are going to do good work in getting literature out to the record lover which is not likely to be found very soon in the big companies.

Tell Mr. Reed that I like the Emerald needle VERY MUCH. I have an RCA 9U2, which has the record changer and after breaking in a new record with one playing with a chromium needle then the Emerald is just FINE. The two articles on needles were NEEDED.

There are two of us here in Grand Rapids, that I know of, that could not get along without the AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER.

Very truly yours,

L. L. Cayvan.

Grand Rapids, Mich. April 10, 1937.

* * * *

To the editor of *The American Music Lover*.

I have been wondering why we have had no album of Wagnerian excerpts sung by Mme. Flagstad. I heard Mme. Flagstad just this week at the Northwestern Festival, and while her singing is gorgeous as ever, there is more than a trace of an edge around the middle voice. Therefore I think as many records as possible should be made while the voice is in its best form.

Such an album should include at least the following:

Goetterdaemmerung; *Immolation Scene*; *Isolde's Narrative and Curse*; *Senta's Ballad*; *Parsifal*; *Ich sah das Kind*; and *Lohengrin: Euch lueften*. This would make a good, five-record album which would undoubtedly sell tremendously.

Another album, which I should like to see, is a *Lieder* album from Marian Anderson, either all Schubert or else one with songs drawn from Schubert, Brahms and Strauss, made when Miss Anderson is in her finest voice, by which I mean as she sounds in her last three Victor releases.

I am told that the magazine was responsible for the album of songs by Mme. Flagstad in the new list; for this I thank you as would many others, I am certain, if they knew of your help in getting it released.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Chandler Hume.

Chicago, Ill. May 15, 1937.

(We are certain there are others who would welcome such recordings as Mr. Hume suggests, but the feasibility of making these at this time is not as easy as the writing or the wish. What most people do not seem to know is that the accompaniment behind the operatic singer, the orchestra, often costs more in the recording today than the artist does; for, the organization that protects the men of the orchestra have placed a high fee for each and every man playing in an orchestra when recording. We hope in the near future to bring out some of the expenses involved in recording in an article, so that those who are impatient with the companies will better understand why they do not do certain things. The preparation, the rehearsal, the actual performance of everything recorded has to be paid for today, and no matter how important some things may seem, that does not assure the companies that they will get out of the recordings all they may put into them.)

The Editor.

How Records Are Made

By DONALD W. ALDOUS, M. Inst. E.

The literature of gramophonics is not so extensive as that of many other arts and sciences, and few people, outside the industry, have anything but a hazy knowledge about the manufacture of the commercial pressing. In this article, we offer a description of record manufacture, which we believe will interest our readers.

It should be noted that although the following description may be taken as representative of the best in the production of the modern records, certain companies may differ slightly in their materials and methods.

I.

AFTER the recording session has taken place, and one or several satisfactory "master" waxes have been "cut", the recorded wax blanks ("filled blanks") are sent to the factory in heated vans to be processed.

Here, after the run-out, lead-out groove or tail has been put on the blank, it is dusted with very fine graphite powder, to make the surface electrically conductive, thus permitting electro-plating. This process requires considerable skill and experience, for the success of the subsequent processes, including the polish of the finished record, is largely dependent on obtaining an even and brilliant layer.

Now the blank is immersed in an electro-plating bath for generally around sixteen hours and so a master matrix is grown of the necessary thickness. The copper is deposited in a smooth form, and when carefully removed from the face of the wax, it bears on the underside an exact replica of the original filled blank, the only difference being that whereas grooves occurred in the wax blank, so ridges appear in the copper, or the

copper master is negative of the positive wax blank.

It is interesting to note the modern revival of one of Edison's ideas applied with up-to-date facilities as an alternative method to the electrolytic process already mentioned. The waxes are inserted in a vacuum chamber where gold is deposited in a thin layer on the recorded surface by a process known as "cathode sputtering," a form of electronic bombardment. It is claimed that surface noise is substantially reduced owing to the continuity of the metal layer deposited by this method.

The master matrix is delicate and when removed it has to be carefully handled to ensure that it shall not be damaged, for now it is the only record the manufacturers have of the original performance, as the wax blank is usually ruined when the copper shell is detached. Special pressings are now taken from the "master," and they undergo various tests, which if successful lead to the next operation, which is to make a number of "mothers" from the master matrix, thus enabling the masters to be stored and retained as the permanent record in the company's fireproof vaults.

These mothers are made by a similar electro-plating process, but to ensure that this further copper shell will come off properly the copper master is first nickel-plated, cleaned and then the plating operation repeated. After the copper has grown to the required thickness, it is removed and so the "mother" is produced, identical with the original but in copper instead of wax. A number of such "mothers" is made, and it is from these positive records that the final stampers (moulds), which obviously must be negatives, are produced. These are formed by a repetition of the electro-deposition process, only this time a thin copper sheet

is formed, and after having their surfaces plated with nickel or chromium to alleviate erosion, they are finally backed with a 0.125 inch copper disc to increase their rigidity and give durability.

These are the "working matrices" or dies, and so we have produced a negative of the original recorded wax ready to be placed in the semi-automatic stamping presses to make the familiar black commercial pressings.

II.

We come now to the raw materials for the moulding compound of the record. The ingredients usually include a mixture of resin (or rosin), carbon or lamp-black, slate powder and from 22 to 25 per cent. of shellac.

Some manufacturers use other natural or synthetic gums in conjunction with the shellac, the main and most costly ingredient, but generally shellac, copal and resin as binding agents, slate powder as a filler, and carbon or lamp-black as a colouring agent are in the composition of the plastic record material. Cotton or wool flock is sometimes included as a toughener.

The shellac is first graded in large mills, which automatically reject any containing impurities. Perfect uniformity in texture of the mixing materials is essential as any foreign matter is injurious, and to attain this end, during the course of manufacture, the material is ground at least once, usually twice, to such an extent that 97-98 per cent. passes through a sieve containing 40,000 holes to the square inch, i. e., a 200 mesh screen, until, in fact, it is fine enough to be floated on air.

Each batch of these materials used has to be tested and approved by the laboratory. The correct proportions of each ingredient in the recipe and the methods of pulverizing and combining the mixture vary with different manufacturers, and are never disclosed.

The mixed material emerges from the rolling mill in sheets of equal thickness. This material is thermo-plastic, i. e., above a certain temperature it becomes soft, but on cooling it hardens. It is therefore rolled out between heated steel rollers, and when it has cooled it is broken into "biscuits". These biscuits are 13½ ins. by 5 ins., and weigh 8 ozs. for ten-inch records; 17½ ins. by 6½

ins., with a weight of 12 ozs. for twelve-inch records.

From the Mixing Factory the biscuits of record material are delivered to the Pressing Shop. Here the metal matrices or stampers are mounted on the top and bottom mould plates (patens) of the hydraulic press and test pressings taken to ensure that no damage has occurred to either matrix, and to ascertain whether the plates have been concentrically set in the press. Also from every batch produced specimen pressings are examined for faults, as upwards of 2,000 records are pressed from a good stamper.

The pressman places on a hot plate the requisite amount of biscuit, which is once again brought to a plastic condition, and after rolling the softened biscuit into a ball the pressing operation is carried out as follows: The title label No. 1 is placed over the centre pin, face downwards on the lower matrix, title label No. 2 face upwards on the centre pin of the upper. Then the softened compound is placed on top of label No. 1 and the hinged top of the press closed and locked. A hydraulic valve is then automatically opened, and a pressure totalling between 70 and 110 tons is applied across the face of the two matrices.

Steam is immediately circulated behind the matrices until the compound is almost liquefied, and this is followed by cold water to reduce the temperature thereby solidifying the compound. In less than one minute the press is opened and the record lifted off the face of the lower matrix, after which the overflow material around the edge is gently broken away. Now we have the record, complete with title labels, almost in its finished condition.

The edge of the record is now buffed (trimmed) and polished on special machines, and so to the testing and inspection departments, where the record are subjected to a number of stringent tests to determine surface-noise, sound quality, etc. The finished and approved records are once more inspected, copyright royalty stamps affixed, and after a final hand polish are placed in their covers and passed by conveyor belts to the huge record stores.

(Editor's Note: There is a Service Bulletin issued by RCA-Victor, profusely illustrated, which tells the story of how records were made from the earliest days of Victor down to the present times. We will be very happy to have this sent to any interested readers.)

Overtones

An Apology

WE regret the anecdote published last month regarding Robert Heger-Goetzl. Mr. Heger-Goetzl is a friend of long standing, whom we first met in Europe through our mutual friend Albert Coates. He is an excellent musician, whose work with operatic and symphony orchestras in Europe and in this country has established him as one of the outstanding younger conductors.

Our correspondent from the Middle West, we feel certain, has been misinformed. Such exaggerated stories are often circulated about musicians, particularly when they step into another man's shoes temporarily and then are forced to leave town for want of work when the owner returns.

Heger-Goetzl is a cousin of Robert Heger's. The relationship is indisputable, as letters and autographed pictures in his possession show. That he is not familiar with all of his eminent cousin's recordings is not surprising. Who, we might ask, is? If he desired to borrow his cousin's recordings, we are certain it was for another reason than that implied in last month's copy. Heger-Goetzl has had excellent training, under Coates for one, and would hardly need his illustrious cousin's counsel, either in person or via records, to perform adequately Wagnerian music. We have no doubt that he may have been interested in the tempi and phrasings of his cousin — but this any conductor might also be.

The Philadelphia Orchestra Pioneers

The following paragraph was culled from a college newspaper northeast of New York. It was written in connection with the recent Philadelphia Orchestra tour.

"The Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra will be featured at . . . Hall, . . . College next . . . at 8 o'clock. The orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, is

noted not only for its clarity of tone and the perfection of its technique, but also for the novelty and variety of its programs. It has had the honor (sic) of introducing many composers whose works have now attained world-wide acclaim. Among these are Bach, Stravinsky and Shostokovich."

New Art of Fugue

Another recording of Bach's *Die Kunst der Fuge* (*The Art of the Fugue*) has been made in Germany. It is performed by Prof. Herman Deiner and members of his College of Music, the location of which we do not know. The recording comprises ten 12-inch discs. It is our understanding that the group is a chamber music ensemble.

A Faure Cycle

Charles Panzéra, the highly talented French baritone, has recorded Gabriel Fauré's song cycle *La Bonne Chanson*, which contains nine songs from poems by Paul Verlaine. At the piano is his equally talented wife, Mme. Panzéra-Baillet.

New Tschaikowsky Recordings

The popularity of Tschaikowsky is indisputable. He is, unquestionably, "everyman's musician."

It will be gratifying news, we feel to many, to know that Heifetz, Barbirolli and the London Philharmonic Orchestra have recorded Tschaikowsky's *Violin Concerto, Opus 35*. And also, that Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra have recorded his *Romeo and Juliet*, with the inimitably clever *March and Scherzo* from Prokofieff's *Love of Three Oranges* as the filler-in on the sixth record face.

Landowska As Pianist

The highly talented Wanda Landowska turns to the piano for a change and records with chamber orchestra, direction Walter

Goehr, Mozart's *Coronation Concerto in D major*, K-397. This is a HMV recording — numbers DB-3147-3150.

* * * *

Viola compositions are rare on records, so the news that William Primrose, the eminent English violist, has recorded the Handel *Concerto in B minor* should be of interest to many music lovers.

Primrose, one of the greatest players of any stringed instrument, will during the coming year be very active in the better broadcasts of the National Broadcasting Company. May we make a plea at this time that he be given further opportunities to display his artistry on records? The Bloch *Suite for Viola and Piano* (the composer contends, and rightly so, that the latter instrument in this work is preferable to the original chamber orchestra accompaniment since the latter submerges the viola line) would be our bid for a first recording.

* * * *

Paderewski, the veteran keyboard virtuoso, has recorded Chopin's *Polonaise in A flat*, *Opus 53* (HMV DB-3134). From all reports this eminent pianist is in fine fettle.

And Petri, continuing his recordings of Beethoven's piano sonatas, has performed his version of the popular *Moonlight Sonata*, *Opus 27, No. 2* for English Columbia (LX-602-3).

* * * *

We recently met a record fan who owned a stack of all the *Swing Music* magazines. Questioning him on what type or variety of *Swing* he liked, we were amazed to hear him disclaim any interest.

"I like Corn (sweet music)," he said.

"But," we exclaimed, "you read all the *Swing* magazines."

"Merely to know what not to buy," he responded.

SEVEN PIANISTS

(Continued from Page 48)

VII. Hofmann

There was never more exquisite pianism than Hofmann's; never a touch more firm and delicate; never a more subtle grading of tones. Considered simply as a pianist, Hofmann has not a rival in the world. But it is necessary to consider him as a musician as well; and here we become aware of limitations. Everything that he plays he plays beautifully; but not everything that he plays is played with a complete intellectual grasp.

Such a work, for example, as Beethoven's penultimate sonata is something more than a chain of lovely impressions. The lovely impressions are, indeed, implicit in it; but there is also a connecting thought that, comprehended, unifies the whole, so that it becomes the vivid expression of the soul of a man — of a man, moreover, who was at that moment ardently in communion with his Maker. Paderewski makes this clear; so does Schnabel. Hofmann misses it, and gives you merely a series of pictures, all of them beautiful but having no necessary relation to one another.

But, when he begins to play the miniatures of Chopin and Schumann, Hofmann is at home, and we his delighted guests. Nothing then is wanting; everything is the sum of gratification. I contend, therefore, that Hofmann is a great artist. Those who have the deepest comprehension of the colossal masterpieces are sometimes very awkward in their handling of the delicacies — Busoni was a case in point. There is room in art for Cortot and Cézanne as well as for Michel Angelo and Rembrandt, for Keats as well as for Wordsworth. If Hofmann gives us only the beautiful notes of Beethoven, he gives us the very soul of Chopin. The soul of Chopin is a gift which I, for one, receive with gratitude. Too often when I go to the concert halls I am offered merely his dry bones.



THE TRAGIC NOTE IN MOZART'S E FLAT SYMPHONY

(Continued from Page 50)

with it: the dark forces that operate there stem from an entirely different, higher, reality than that of the everyday, and moved his inner self much more deeply than the other.

As a revelation of the composer's state of mind *while at work* this is probably as close to the truth as we shall ever be. But if we probe still deeper, perhaps something can be added. H. Jahncke, a psychologist, has analysed composition thus:

Composition is the result of the creative balance of two forces. The first is the force of the objective features imminent in the musical material. It originates in physical and psycho-physical sources, the latter projected into the material in the course of human and musical development. The second force is the personal subjective aspect of life. *This is a synthesis, according to personal type, of joy and sorrow components of varying quality and intensity.*

All sorts of emotional experiences, physical and psychic, pour into the sensitive mechanism, and by some mysterious metabolism they are turned into the flesh, bone and blood of masterworks.

Examined from this point of view, Abert's statement seems to imply that the emotions of the composer fit neatly into airtight, plainly labelled, compartments — one for everyday feelings, another for those belonging to the "higher reality." We are allowed to infer that there is an unbridgeable gap between experience and creation. But Jahncke's thoughtful description yields the following corollary: No one can say that at some time in the obscure process of gestation the composer may not unconsciously have drawn musical sustenance from the emotions engendered by his unhappiness. No one can deny that Mozart's wretched circumstances *may* have had some share of influence in the composition of the *E-flat Symphony*.

But if they had, why is it that the symphony, apart from the passages discussed above, is predominantly cheerful? The answer, I think, is to be found in the volatile

nature of Mozart himself. "I am very unhappy! — always between anxiety and hope!" he wrote to Puchberg in July, 1789. As Mersmann points out,

A first movement is compounded of sound and motion, breathes the spirit of the suite; in the second, introspective, the man stands before us in all his stark misery.

And this spiritual conflict may be observed not only between movements, but also between parts of a single movement.

It is difficult enough to get a living composer (of whatever merit) to comprehend and reveal what goes on within him. The task of penetrating into the subconscious mind of a genius dead almost a hundred and fifty years is hopeless. We glean what we can from the works, the letters and the more or less trustworthy testimony of contemporaries. But in spite of the obscurity that surrounds Mozart's inner life, careful examination of available sources allows us to make a number of inferences. One of these, the result of cyclopaedic knowledge and sympathetic insight, is Abert's statement quoted above. Another, not at all contradictory to the first but only supplementing it, and the result of application of modern psychological method, is the conclusion we have drawn from Jahncke. We may now say that although Mozart, while at work, had no conscious thought of the cares that plagued him from every side, and devoted all his attention to the musical problems he had set himself to solve, at the same time the musical material may have been subconsciously derived from, or colored by, the emotions aroused by the depressing environment of his everyday life.

NEW RCA TUBE MANUAL

The new RCA Tube Manual (RC-13), available at dealers or at RCA Radiatron Company, Harrison, New Jersey for 25 cents, in addition to listing all the available RCA tubes, has an elementary and understandable exploration of many electrical amplification problems which should interest our scientifically minded readers, for example, discussions of and circuits for volume expanders, inverse feed-back circuits to reduce distortion in the output.

Record Notes and Reviews

Reviewers in This Issue: A. P. De Weese, Philip Miller, and
Peter Hugh Reed

ORCHESTRAL

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90*; played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Bruno Walter. Victor set M-341, four discs, price \$6.50.

BRAHMS' *Third Symphony* has never attained the popularity of the other symphonies, despite the fact that "it is perhaps the finest, certainly the clearest, of all his instrumental compositions for orchestra," as Hadow has noted, "forcible and vigorous in movement, delightful in melody, and of course, faultless in construction." Via the phonograph, the *Third Symphony* has not had imposing treatment; one cannot term Stokowski's set good, for while it was more popular than the other two recordings, it was not a true interpretation of the music, for Stokowski missed the energy and vigor of the first and last movements. His reading, however, was infinitely preferable to Mengelberg's sadly distorted one. The best interpretation of the work, prior to the present set, that made by Clemens Krauss, was never released domestically. But the discriminating music lover knew of it, and many were the importations of this set from Europe.

Bruno Walter excels in Brahms — he feels and conveys the romanticist in him without undue emphasis. His reading of the *Fourth Symphony* has for this reason taken precedence over all others. In his reading of the *Third*, we are impressed with the clarity of detail and the easy flow of the music and his attention to the contrasts of the score, which are neither exaggerated nor understated. Perhaps Walter might have given us more bite in the first movement, Krauss did; and again a little less emphasis on the nostalgic note in the third movement. On the whole, however, his reading is well planned and thoughtfully worked out. The sensuous beauty in which the score abounds is brought out, but not stressed, as in Stokowski's recording.

In all fairness to the others, it must be admitted that Walter fares better from a recording standpoint. And, as a matter of fact, this recording is wholly satisfying in its reproduction of an orchestra which has not fared too well under the hands of others. The "highs" seem particularly good, without being too brilliant. Apparently the hall, in which the recording was made, is not the same one utilized in the Weingartner recordings, or else it is draped differently, since the echo is not as pronounced.

The *Third Symphony* of Brahms has been termed autumnal in quality in its inner movements. Kalbeck's supposition that these movements were originally intended by Brahms as music for Goethe's *Faust* gives us a keynote to their inspiration, and also a reason for the above observation. It is the last movement of this work which strikes us most forcibly. Perhaps no Brahmsian coda is more impressive, more memorable than that of this movement — it is assuredly Brahms in a truly inspired moment.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

DEBUSSY: *Clair de lune* from *Suite Bergamasque* (Transcribed for orchestra by Stokowski); played by Philadelphia Orchestra, direction Leopold Stokowski. Victor disc 1812, 10-inch, price \$1.50.

THERE is an irrefutable graciousness, an atmospheric charm, to this music which has endeared it to many people. When played on the piano by a gifted artist, this little piece would seem to be completely satisfactory to us. But so many amateurs play at it, and people have become so familiar with it in this manner, that a growing demand has sprung up for an orchestral version on records, hence this disc.

Stokowski knows the potentialities of an orchestra, and in this transcription he real-

izes and achieves some rarely nuanced effects which are unquestionably intimated in the music; but the addition of the vibraphone in the latter part seems to us completely out of place. But since this transcription, heard originally on the air, has been requested by people from coast to coast, it might be just as well to permit it to fulfill its destiny without extended reproach for the interjection of an alien instrument in the symphony orchestra. Too, since the recording here is perfectly balanced and the tonal quality is in no way attenuated, we feel certain that those who like the piece will welcome its advent in orchestral guise.

—P. H. R.

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NICOLAI: *Merry Wives of Windsor* — Overture; played by London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction Sir Thomas Beecham. Columbia disc No. 68938, price \$1.50.

NICOLAI, 1810 to 1849, is best remembered today for his comic opera *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; he saw it performed but did not live to enjoy its brilliant success, since he completed it only two months prior to his untimely death. This opera is still given in Europe, and is highly regarded by many for its musical vivacity and wit.

The moonlight rising over the forest of Windsor, supposedly depicted in the opening of the overture, is not hastily outlined by Beecham. Without being oversentimental, he stresses its suggested warmth. The clarity of detail in this reading of an old favorite is astonishing. Beecham excels in this sort of thing. The music of the forest revelry, however, is not too effervescent, the motley gang is a bit too well-ordered; but, on the whole the quality of the performance is finer than anything we've had before, and the recording — well, need I say more than — it is comparable to the best of Beecham?

—P. H. R.

* * * *

ROUSSEL: *Symphony No. 3 in G minor*, Opus 42; played by the Lamoureux Symphony Orchestra, direction Albert Wolff. Brunswick-Polydor set No. 3, three discs, price \$5.00.

THIS recording must date back all of six years, and yet its tonal qualities are in no way dated. In my estimation, it is comparable to a great deal that has recently

emanated from recording studios in Europe; which is only another way of saying that Polydor was far in advance in the art of recording a half dozen years ago. This repressing from the original Polydor matrices onto Columbia's laminated surfaces makes it essential, for good reproduction, to open the grooves in the first two or three playings with a chromium needle — after which, your favorite point will function better.

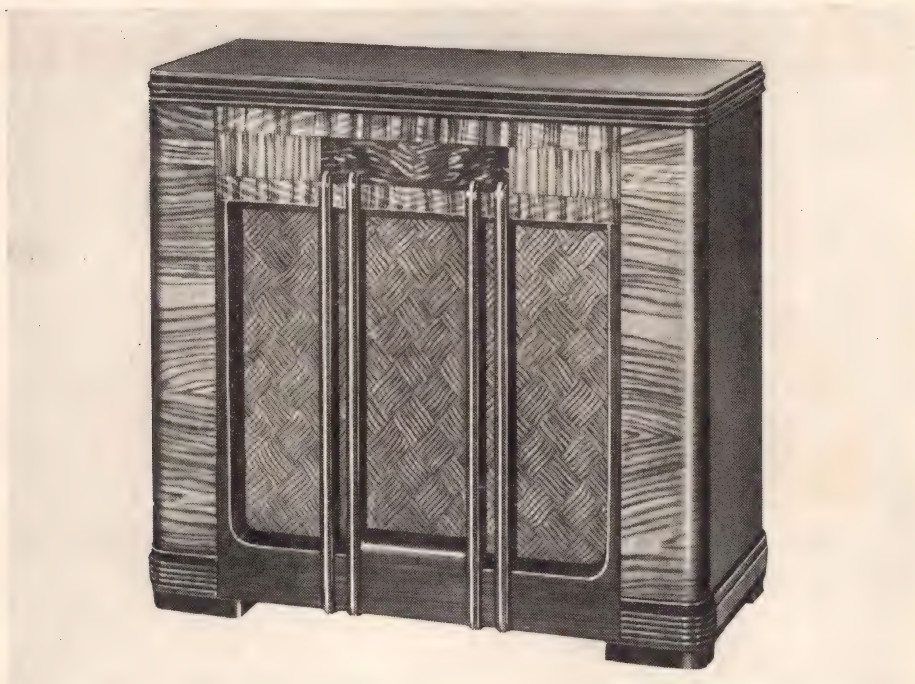
Roussel wrote this symphony in 1930, as a special contribution to the 50th anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The work was received with considerable acclaim both in this country and in Europe. Polytonal in texture but classical in form, the symphony is in the spirit of contemporaneous musical thought. I have always had great admiration for this music, because I have found that it wore well and repeated itself favorably. The rhythmic energy of the opening movement is especially striking and quickens one's aural perceptions with each replaying. Its dissonance is strong and compelling; and it has that quality of inevitability about it which never leaves one in doubt as to where the music is going. The second movement, an *Adagio*, is most original, fugal in structure, and its instrumentation is both ingenious and unusual. The third movement I like least of all, it is strangely conventional, less interesting. Perhaps the most compelling section of the work is the final *Allegro con spirito*. Brilliant, yet dark-hued in coloring, it is most arresting.

The work, considered as a whole, is an interesting and imposing one, combining modern technique with traditional form, in my estimation, the opus of an artist who is both fastidious and distinctive in his style and workmanship.

Roussel has been called a painter expressing himself through the less graphic art of music. Admitting his music abounds in color, and also that his harmonic structure is often a pageantry of tonal nuances, yet is it color alone, when his linear structure is equally as important and as assured?

Although Roussel has been greatly influenced by his contemporaries, his music nevertheless emanates from a sedulously cultivated and distinctly versatile personal musical thought. His fastidiousness is, however, not only one of the distinguishing qualities of his music, but also one that removes it from the domain of everyman. And yet, I

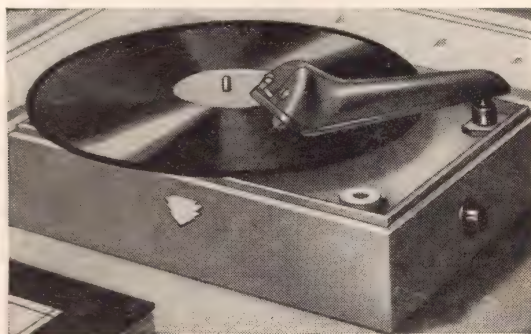
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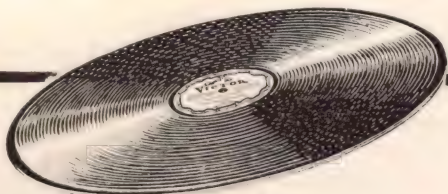
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**Symphony No. 3 in F-Major (Brahms, Op. 90) M-341 (12022-12025)
Price \$6.50**

A new recording of Brahms' *Third Symphony* has long been highly desirable. Bruno Walter, universally acknowledged as one of the greatest Brahms interpreters, gives a particularly cherishable reading of a notable score with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the world's oldest symphony orchestra.

**Quartette No. 8 in E-Minor. (Beethoven, Op. 59, No. 2) M-340
(14313-14316). Price \$8.00**

Beethoven's "*Rasoumowsky*" *Quartettes* exemplify his genius at the height of his creative powers. This, the second of the series, is regarded as warmly human and deeply poetic in content. The Budapest String Quartette, who excel in Beethoven, play this work in a truly devotional manner.



VICTOR RECORDS

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would recommend that all hear this music, for no music need be limited in its appeal.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

TSCHAIKOWSKY: *Divertissement* (*Variations from The Sleeping Beauty*), Op. 66; played by Orchestre Symphonique, direction of J. E. Szyfer, under the supervision of Serge Lifar. Columbia disc, No. 68934D, price \$1.50.

THE music of Tschaiikowsky's ballet, *La Belle aux bois dormante*, or *Dornroeschen*, or, if you prefer, *The Sleeping Beauty*, is familiar in a number of different forms. The work has been drawn on for a number of choreographic productions, and the recorded repertoire of such music is gradually growing. Victor recently released *Aurora's Wedding*, which was taken from the same original, and of course the *Waltz* is an old faithful warhorse.

This latest Columbia disc belongs among the increasing number of strictly ballet recordings, as it was made under the direction of Serge Lifar, who was featured as the successor to Nijinsky in the Diaghileff Russian Ballet. For what it is this music is effective, characteristic and graceful, and both performance and recording are eminently satisfactory.

—P. M.

* * * *

WAGNER: *Siegfried Idyll*; played by Grande Orchestre Philharmonique of Paris, direction Selmar Meyrowitz, Columbia set X-74, two discs, price \$3.00.

ALL the participants in the drama of the first presentation, and, as a matter of fact, the inspiration of this music, are now dead and gone. But not forgotten, because the story of how Wagner wrote this work for the birthday of his wife, which incidentally was Christmas day, as a tribute to the young mother and her baby son, is a human interest story that is not soon likely to be forgotten.

Richard, Cosima, and Siegfried — these were the three. How proud Wagner was of that son, and how he dreamed great things for him, are all implied by his name. Siegfried was a superman, in Wagner's estimation, and he did hope that his son would be a greater man than he turned out to be. There is a rare sentiment and optimism in the aura of the *Idyll*, a non-defeatist inspiration. But

music can imply so much, and promise and even prophecy events and things that life too often does not concede.

This is not "just another" recording of the *Siegfried Idyll*, but a fine musicianly performance of this music, a performance setting forth the warmly human qualities of the music, its sensual beauty and its benevolence. Meyrowitz has proven his conductorial worth on records before, but never more strikingly. The lyrical grace, the lifting lilt of the music is rarely conveyed in the beginning. It is a pity that the orchestra is not better, for Meyrowitz knows how to plan and get results, but there are sections, notably the one where the woodwinds and the horns are given full rein near the end of the second side of the recording, where the playing lacks the essential quality and the standard of performance which Meyrowitz obtains, for example, in the opening and closing sections of the work.

Comparison with other versions of this music places this new one well at the head of the list. Perhaps for many the ideal performance will never be realized on records, for the intimacy of this tender and benign music demands subtleties that cannot yet be ideally realized in a recording. Even Toscanini, who gives a particularly beneficent reading, does not fare too well.

The recording here is good, but not outstanding.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

BAND

HANDEL: *Dead March, from Saul*;
CHOPIN: *Funeral March*, played by the Regimental Band of H. M. Grenadier Guards, direction of Major George Miller. Columbia disc, No. 7340-M, price \$1.25.

TO just what audience this disc is dedicated I am at a loss to say, for though there may be more people in these United States than I know of who enjoy sitting and listening to well-known funeral marches, played in the best military tradition (muffled drums and all), this record hardly seems like popular fare. It may, of course, be intended for the use of funeral parlors; if so it will be found satisfactory.

The labels tell their own story. The performances are just what one would expect, and the recording is thoroughly good.

—P. M.

CONCERTO

MOZART: *Piano Concerto in E flat, K. 271*; played by Walter Gieseking and State Opera House Orchestra, Berlin, direction Hans Rosbaud. Columbia set No. 291, four discs, price \$6.00.

SOMEONE once said music was a language as definite as Italian or German to Mozart. He spoke it freely, and he spoke it well. How graciously it came from him, even in his earliest days. At twenty-one, what a wealth of speech lay behind him, and what an unexplored range of language lay ahead.

This delightful concerto was written at twenty-one, when its composer was on a visit to Paris. Its inspiration seems to have been a young French virtuoso, Mlle. Jeunhomme. For the moment, she must have stirred him deeply, for the lovely *Andantino* is richly poetic. The work opens quite differently from most of Mozart's piano concertos, for the piano is evidenced in the beginning. Whether or not this opening was the source of Beethoven's inspiration for his *Emperor Concerto* is, even though not unlikely, at best conjectural.

The whole work flows, not pretentiously or too patently, but in an irresistably quiet manner. If one were over-stimulated by music of violence, perhaps the contrast of this music might help manifest it more lucidly; or again, if one were incited by music of more pretentious formality, the beauty, the inevitability of this music might fail to impress at the moment. It is music to be heard in a leisure moment, to be treasured and preserved for such periods thereafter. And Gieseking's performance is in keeping with it, not exciting but serene and ingenuous.

This is music of delicate and reserved inspiration, beautifully poetic in the manner of Bach and Beethoven in its slow section, and melodically friendly in its faster movements, as Mozart, and only Mozart, could so easily be. In all the movements there are charming cadenzas, the work of the young composer himself. Not too difficult, although fashioned with particular care, he wrote them in the manner of poetic improvisations "requiring more sentiment than technique."

One imagines this concerto might have sounded in the composer's day just about as it sounds from this recording. Possibly Mlle. Jeunhomme played it with more brilliance than does M. Gieseking, and possibly the orchestra was a little more in conjunc-

tion than the one in the recording, but we doubt if either gave a more musicianly performance than the participants do here. The reproduction is quite in keeping with the music.

—P. H. R.

REPRESSINGS

BEETHOVEN: *Rondo in C major, Opus 51, No. 2*; and *Für Elise*; played by Artur Schnabel. Victor disc, No. 14322, price \$2.00.

GLAZOUNOW: *Meditation, Opus 32*; and WIENIAWSKI: *Scherzo Tarantelle, Opus 16*; played by Jascha Heifetz. Victor disc No. 14323, price \$2.00.

BACH: *Andante* from *Sonata No. 2 in A minor*; and *Sarabande* from *Partita No. 1 in B minor*; played by Yehudi Menuhin, Victor disc No. 14324, price \$2.00.

MOZART: *Marriage of Figaro, Overture*; and PAGANINI: *Moto Perpetuo, Allegro di Concerto*; played by Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, direction Eugene Ormandy. Victor disc 14325, price \$2.00.

THESE are fillers-in on various sets graduated onto separate discs of their own. The idea is not an original one with Victor, since it was first done in Europe; but it is a worthy one which we are glad to see Victor carrying on.

The Beethoven *Rondo* was on the odd side of the recording of his *Third Piano Concerto* (Victor set M-194), and *Für Elise* came from set M-158, the *First Piano Concerto*.

The Heifetz recordings came from the odd sides of the Glazounow and Wieniawski concerto sets M-218 and M-275; and the Menuhin selections were taken from the Mozart *Violin Concerto No. 7* and Bach's *Partita No. 2* — sets M-231 and M-323.

Ormandy's recording of the Mozart overture came from *Adventures in a Perambulator* (John Alden Carpenter) — set M-238. The Paganini piece is the only excerpt not drawn from a set, as it was first put out on Victor disc 8661 with Gounod's *Funeral March of a Marionette* as its companion. Why the duplication here, we cannot say, unless the other disc is being withdrawn.

The merits of these various selections have all been discussed before, so we will simply reaffirm that they are all worthily interpreted, and well recorded, except for the Beethoven pieces.

—P. H. R.

CHAMBER MUSIC

BEETHOVEN: *Quintet in C major, Opus 29*; played by the Lener String Quartet and William Primrose (viola). Columbia set 294, four discs, price \$6.00.

WITH the completion of this work in 1801, Beethoven turned away from this branch of music for five years; then came the celebrated Rasumowsky quartets, one of which I have reviewed above.

Paul Bekker in his excellent book, "Beethoven," tells us that the composer "cultivated the keys of *C major* and *C minor* contemporaneously until he united them, and explored to the depths the characteristics of both . . ." A striking example of this he finds evidenced in the *Fifth Symphony*. These same contrasts are to be found, he also contends, in the earlier compositions, "where pairs of works in *C major* and *C minor* respectively are complimentary."

"A psychological affinity of this kind clearly exists between the *C minor Quartet*, which bears no relation to the other members of the *Opus 18* group," he states, "and the *C major String Quintet, Opus 29*. A mood of deep earnestness is common to each, but whereas the quartet is full of passionate excitement, the quintet suggests exalted repose; the opening movement of the *Quintet*, indeed, might be played immediately after the close of the *C minor Quartet*, so clearly does it confirm and develop the 'major' mood, barely attained and shortly stated at the end of the work."

The tremolos and semi-quaver passages in the last movement have given this work the sobriquet of the *Storm Quintet*, but this need not be taken seriously in our regard or estimation of it.

This is not the Beethoven of the *Opus 59* quartets, nor do we concede this music to be on a level with the *C minor Quartet* of *Opus 18*. The work, however, has many attractive features, and is most pleasantly tuneful. Beethoven starts out engagingly in first movements of several other early chamber works — I think immediately of the *Flute Serenade, Opus 25* — then lets us down, not abruptly but in a more or less gracious manner. His slow movement here is somewhat protracted, even though it has its lovely moments. The *scherzo* has fire, and it picks up

our lagging interest, but the finale does not sustain it.

The Leners evidently have not lived with this work too long; their performance is not as finished as we would like to hear it. We are not convinced that Primrose was an ideal companion for them in this venture, despite his splendid musicianship; but then we have always felt that Primrose was happier as soloist than as one of a chamber group. The leader of the quartet seems to dominate upon occasion, and this is not as things should be.

The recording here is not, in our estimation, as fine as the last release from the Leners. We daresay it will work out alright, however, on higher-fidelity equipment.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

BEETHOVEN: *String Quartet in E minor, Opus 59, No. 2*; played by the Budapest String Quartet. Victor set M-340, four discs, price \$8.00.

THE Budapest String Quartet is certainly one of the foremost quartets before the present day public. Whether considered in actual performance or via records, they remain a completely satisfying group of players. They strive neither for virtuosity nor for over-refinement, but instead achieve an amalgamation of all the best qualities that go to make a perfect chamber ensemble. How admirably they realize the spirit and the letter of the music has been set forth before on records; yet, listening to this performance, it seems as though they never so completely conveyed the core of a composition.

The three quartets, which form Beethoven's *Opus 59*, represent his genius at a most impressive pinnacle. Numbers one and two are closely related. They are both founded on contrast and conflict, the first being objective and energetic, the second subtle and subjective. Beethoven's *E minor* compositions, wrote the late Paul Bekker, "are among the most delicately felt and exquisitely shaded of his works." The music of the first and second movements of this work is full of mystery. The *adagio*, so exquisitely wrought, so spacious, so unhurried in its movement, so deeply devotional, was drawn from the composer's belief in a supreme being. It is said to have been inspired by a nocturnal absorption of the starry heavens in the valley of Baden. The contrast of the

allegretto is effective, but the humor is not without its underlying note of seriousness. The *trio*, with its Russian theme, sounds a slightly alien note. The finale is boisterous, implying triumphant elation. Conquest and triumph, through which the way "lay open for the free development of his own personality," these are the basic impulses of Beethoven's music at this time. We hear them in the third, the fourth and the fifth symphonies, says Bekker, "and it is of these works that the Opus 59 quartets are an abstract and epitome."

The recording here is splendidly realized from the standpoint of tonal quality and balance. This, in our estimation, is the feature set of the month, not the song album of Mme. Flagstad. If only the music loving public could separate themselves from the artist's personality, and enter into music's vast and richly rewarding kingdom! Do we hear a multiple choir of "amens"? — we hope so!

—P. H. R.

* * * *

BERG: *Lyric Suite*; played by the Galimar String Quartet. Brunswick-Polydor set No. 2, four discs, price \$6.00.

ALBAN BERG has been called a remarkable composer, and also a decadent one. I must confess I find justification for both assertions. His opera *Wozzeck*, this suite, and his *Violin Concerto*, all of which I have heard at various times, have impressed me with his striking genius, and at the same time struck me with his unhealthy aestheticism. Berg was, in my estimation, a sensual sentimentalist; there are in him qualities which I associate mentally with Heinrich Heine and Oscar Wilde. That he followed in the steps of his notable teacher, Schoenberg, and thereby cloaked his romantic and distinctly sensual expressions in a different raiment does not disguise his natural bent. Schoenberg found strength, more intellectual it is true than emotional, in his usage of atonality, while Berg endeavored to realize poetic depths which the destruction of the sense of key (in atonality) does not always happily permit. His music is not for everyone, and I doubt if it could be enjoyed in anything but homeopathic doses.

We are told that Berg composed "in obedience to a genuine urge and in accordance with his own uncompromising ideals, and took it for granted that it would find scant appreciation except among a sympathetic few."

COLUMBIA

— OFFERS —

SET No. 291

MOZART: CONCERTO IN E FLAT MAJOR, K-271 FOR PIANO and ORCHESTRA. Played by Walter Gieseking (Pianist) and The Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hans Rosbaud. On Four 12-inch records.

(A First Recording)

SET No. 294

BEETHOVEN: QUINTET IN C MAJOR, OP. 29, FOR STRINGS. Played by The Lener String Quartet (Lener - Smilovits - Roth - Hartman) and William Primrose (Second Viola). On Four 12-inch Records.

(A First Recording)

SET No. X-73

WAGNER: SIEGFRIED IDYLL (In Four Parts). Played by Grand Orchestre Philharmonique of Paris conducted by Selmar Meyrowitz.

(A Thrilling New Full Range Recording)

68938-D

NICOLAI: MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR — OVERTURE (In Two Parts). Played by The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham.

68934-D

TSCHAIKOWSKY: DIVERTISSEMENT, Op. 66 (Variations from "The Sleeping Beauty"). Played by Orchestre Symphonique conducted by J. E. Szyfer (Under the personal choreographic direction of Serge Lifar of The Paris Opera).

68939-D

BEETHOVEN: SONATA IN F SHARP MAJOR, OP. 78. Played by Egon Petri (Pianist).

68935-D

FAURE: NOCTURNE No. 6 (In Two Parts). Played by Marguerite Long (Pianist).

68936-D

BOCCHERINI: SONATA No. 6 IN A MAJOR (In Two Parts). Played by Maurice Marechal (Cellist) with Maurice Faure at the Piano.



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This then prepares the music lover for what he is to hear when he approaches this music. There is no question that the work is an important one in its field, it has been as a fact termed the composer's finest chamber composition; but this does not mean that it will appeal to any more than a chosen few. To derive the utmost pleasure from this music, one should follow the score, for the wide leaps and skips, the intricate polyphonic writing, is better clarified in that manner at a first hearing.

The work is divided into six movements, three in rapid tempo and three in slow time. The rapid movements increase in speed as the work progresses and the slow ones decrease. The form of the various sections might well be outlined here, since no booklet is included with the set. They are: first—sonata form (not strict); second—Rondo, with two episodes; third—Scherzo and Trio; fourth—a rhapsodic section, not in formal construction; fifth—a scherzo-like section with two trio-like interludes; and sixth—another free form which has been termed declamatory and rhapsodic.

One of the most striking features of this unusual work is Berg's comprehensive writing for the strings.

The Galimars' performance of this music is brilliant. The technical difficulties of the work are enormous, as anyone following the score will immediately perceive. But they have not only surmounted all these but also faithfully realized the composer's directions and thereby contributed a lasting phonographic tribute to a strange and morbid genius, who unfortunately is no longer with us. The recording is truly outstanding, but you will need a chromium to open successfully the recording grooves for a completely satisfactory reproduction.

—P. H. R.

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BOCCHERINI: *Sonata No. 6 in A Major, Adagio and Allegro*; played by Maurice Maréchal, 'cellist, and Maurice Fauré, pianist. Columbia 68936, price \$1.50.

THIS record gives the same two movements that Casals recorded for Victor, and also omits the *Affettuoso*. The work may be found in Piatti's collection of the sonatas for 'cello and pianoforte. The expressive themes have virtuoso adornments and well exploit the possibilities of the instrument. It is no won-

der that Boccherini's music was received with acclaim in its day, and much admired by Haydn; it is difficult to imagine why posterity has neglected it so.

Maréchal's playing is superb in its rich warmth and elegance, and the microphone has caught it with faultless fidelity.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

PIERNE: *Prelude and Fugue*; played by The Curtis Woodwind Ensemble, direction of Marcel Tabuteau. Victor ten-inch disc, No. 4332, price \$1.00.

IT is a rather curious coincidence that Victor should release this little disc in the same month that Columbia contributes to the scant but growing list of domestic Pierné records. The circumstance is the more amusing as both of these additions are performed entirely on wind instruments. Nevertheless, nothing could better illustrate the breadth of the composer's musical style than the contrast between the two offerings.

I have been unable to find any information about the genesis of this *Prelude and Fugue*, but I assume that it belongs among the comparatively recent works of its composer. In style it is rather a mixture, modern and contrapuntal, skillful and amusing, musicianly and yet smacking of the ballet. It is as far removed from the *Variations libres et finale* which Columbia recently brought to our attention as it is from the facile little *Serenade* by which we have all known Pierné for so long. It shows that this composer has not only a technique but a sense of humor, and the combination of instruments gives it a refreshingly novel sound. A miniature in form, content and tone, the work is excellently played and splendidly recorded.

—P. M.

PIANO

ALBENIZ: *Sérénade espagnole*, and *Tango in A minor*; played by Ricardo Vines. Victor disc, No. 4331, price \$1.00.

ALBENIZ had a rather confusing habit of republishing his works under new titles and with new opus numbers. The *Sérénade espagnole* which Ricardo Vines plays for us here is also known as *Cadiz*, and as such takes its place as No. 4 in the *Suite espagnole*. When it is given under the title of *Sérénade espagnole* the piece is listed as Opus 181.

The *Tango in A minor* is not the very famous *Tango*, but may be identified as No. 2 of the *Deux danses espagnoles*, Op. 164. Both the *Tango* and the *Sérénade* are colorful and effective in their way, and will appeal to lovers of Spanish music. The *Sérénade* has been recorded in innumerable arrangements, usually as *Cadiz*, but the *Tango* is new to the wax.

Ricardo Vines is surely the logical artist to play these pieces for us, since he has expended an enormous amount of energy in making the works of Albeniz known. His reputation as a pioneer and missionary has been so great that the general tendency has been to overlook his really outstanding abilities as a performer. This is his first appearance on the Victor label, but we are promised more; perhaps we will be given examples of others of his debtor-composers — Ravel or Debussy, for example. This recording sets a high standard.

—P. M.

* * * *

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in F Sharp, Opus 78*; played by Egon Petri. Columbia 68939-D, price \$1.50.

ONE of the relatively unfamiliar sonatas is the *Opus 78 in F Sharp Major*, and one on whose merits the musical commentators are not in agreement. Gottschalk feels that the yearning theme of the *Allegro* soon works itself out, and as it loses substance fritters itself away in a meaningless play of sound. Lenz says that Beethoven's hand has worked at it, but not his genius. Schauffler calls it the absolute musician's sonata, with an autumnal glow that foreshadows Beethoven's third period, and finds the composer is already losing interest in virtuoso display and concentrating on sheer music, without any care to make it grateful or effective. Beethoven himself was partial to this *Opus*.

With Petri playing, it presents no difficulties to the listener. The sonata is brief, for with the repeats it occupies only one record. It is not repetitious, and it is entirely free from padding. The transitions are often abrupt, but unfailingly interesting. A strong vitality pervades the whole work.

The first theme of the *Allegro* was fruitful for the composer. He used it in the *A Major Cello Sonata* and again in the *Archduke Trio*. It turns up, in much the same form, in later men's work, as in the finale of the Franck *Violin and Piano Sonata*.

Petri's performance is exemplary from the standpoint of piano technique. In its meticulous following of the many markings in the score it sounds creative rather than academic. Petri maintains a thoroughly *scherzo* mood in the *Allegro Assai*, with broad humor in the buzzing figure where the left hand trails up and down the keyboard imitating the right hand.

The recording reflects the clarity of the playing except in a few short quick passages, where it becomes somewhat blurred.

This disc can do much in raising this neglected sonata to its deserved place in popular esteem.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

BORODIN (arr. Babin): *Prince Igor — Dances of the Polovetzki Maidens*; played by Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin. Victor disc, No. 12030, price \$1.50.

THE constantly increasing list of two-piano records would seem to indicate two things. First, that there is a demand for music in this medium, and second, that there is no real two-piano music, but that the artists must rely altogether on transcriptions. Of course this latter conclusion is not true. The literature may not be an outstandingly rich one, but so far the recorders have avoided it like poison.

This spectacular performance, then, does not fill a very definite need. On a concert program we might be dazzled and amused by the sheer virtuosity of the two players, but in buying a record with which, after all, we are to live, we look for something more solid than the fireworks into which poor innocent Borodin's ballet music has been turned by the transcriber. Those of us who are interested in having a recording of the *Polvetzki Dances* will not want them in this form, which leaves only the admirers of the piano team as probable buyers. The phonograph is building up a generation of purists, because now, as never before, it is possible to hear our music often enough and carefully enough to form our own opinions. Whatever the type of music, most of us like to feel that we are getting the real goods when we buy a new record.

The recording is full and brilliant as the playing.

—P. M.

CHOPIN: *Nocturnes in D flat, Opus 27 and E flat, Opus 9, No. 2; Mazurkas in B minor, Opus 33, No. 4 and A flat, Opus 50, No. 2 and G major, Opus 67, No. 1; Waltzes in A flat, Opus 42 and C sharp minor, Opus 64, No. 2; Preludes Opus 28, Nos. 6, 3 and 7; and Chant Polonaise No. 1 (arr. Liszt);* played by Moritz Rosenthal. Victor set M-338, price \$8.00.

ROSENTHAL at seventy-six proves the old adage that great artistry knows no limitations of age. For his playing today is still as sensitive and as technically proficient as it was thirty years or more ago. If maturity is evidenced in his artistry, it has not subdued or diminished its emotional qualities, but instead mellowed them with the result that we note in these Chopin selections (recorded last year) a warmth and a richness of tonal color that is suggestive of autumnal shades.

Rosenthal's pianism is immaculate, a judiciously combined expression of true feeling and perfect technique. A pupil of Liszt, Rosenthal has successfully carried on the virtuoso elements according to the best traditions of his great teacher. And, as that piano master did before him, he knows when to stress technical brilliance and when not to. Striking features of Mr. Rosenthal's recent American concert tour were his mastery of different styles and his uncanny ability to preserve the rhythmic impulse in his use of *rubati*.

It is in hackneyed works like the youthful nocturne in *E flat* and the seventh prelude, where Rosenthal's rare pianism is immediately apparent. We need more recorded performances like these of such familiar works.

The pianist's program here is well diversified, presenting as it does several aspects of Chopin's genius, and also his celebrated teacher's uneventfully embellished transcription of Chopin's song, *The Maiden's Wish*, which the late Marcella Sembrich used so successfully as an encore.

The spirit of Mr. Rosenthal's various performances is in keeping with the character of the music except in the case of the three *Mazurkas*. (There are two *Mazurkas*, not one, as indicated on the "B" side of record No. 14298, the second being the *G major* one from *Opus 67*. This omission seems to have been the fault of the recorders in England, and not the domestic company.) Mr. Rosen-

thal's playing of the *mazurkas* lacks some of the essential fire that a Horowitz or a Friedman obtain; but we daresay many will derive great pleasure from his pianism here.

The recording of these various works is considerably better than the average run of piano discs from English HMV.

—P. H. R.

* * * *

FAURE: *Nocturne No. 6;* played by Marguerite Long. Columbia disc, No. 68935-D, price \$1.50.

COLUMBIA adds another valuable item to the list of domestic Fauré records. The *Sixth Nocturne, Op. 63*, is universally conceded first place among the *Nocturnes* and is one of the finest of Fauré's piano works. Cortot places it almost, but not quite, with the *Theme and Variations, Op. 73*, which he considers the best of all.

This is pianism of the very highest order, and the music is full of imagination and feeling. With a repertoire limited to a few favorite composers, and worn rather thin in spots, one wonders how our pianists can overlook Fauré. He is a composer of individuality and charm whom one has only to know in order to love. He writes as well for the instrument as Liszt, has the warm humanity of Schumann, the instinct for form characteristic of Mozart, the poetry of Chopin and the sanity of Bach; yet his ample legacy of piano music is allowed to remain untouched.

The story is told that someone once asked Fauré beneath what wonderful sky, in what exotic climate, in what voluptuous landscape he had conceived his *Sixth Nocturne*. To which he replied, "Under the Simplon tunnel." This is music of mood, not of description, of emotion rather than experience.

Mme. Long, as usual, plays the work with admirable clarity and understanding, though in this recording her tone sounds rather steely and unyielding.

—P. M.

* * * *

MOZART: *Piano Sonata in F major, K-332*, (5 sides), and *Rondo in D major, K-485;* played by Ernst Victor Wolff. Musicraft album No. 1, three discs, price \$4.50.

HENRI GHEON suggests that many of Mozart's sonatas are disdained "because so

many of us have sweated over them before being able to grasp their meaning, their subtlety and their perfection." It is a point well taken. This sonata is so very popular one wonders why it has not been recorded previously, and then at once one recalls many amateur efforts to play it and the reason is found in the thought. But recordings of works like this *are* needed, for they can not only delight the uninitiated but they can immeasurably assist those who are striving to grasp the import of them.

Our assistant, Philip Miller, provides Musicraft with their leaflet for their first album set. His are scholarly notes, and since they take up the question of the importance of Mozart's piano sonatas from a historical standpoint, we shall not pursue that path here. Mr. Miller rightfully contends that Mozart's sonatas "belong to the type of music which exists solely for the beauty of sound, yet they demand of the performer much more than the ability to play notes."

This is not one of Mozart's most inspired works, although it has many attractive features. Its proportions and balance will bear analysis. The vivacious finale, says Eric Blom, "has the sound of a *rondo*, but is a sonata movement with an abnormally long working-out of two and a half pages and a coda surprisingly approached by an interrupted cadence." Blom awoke our curiosity and set us investigating, with the result that the finale gained in meaning, although its form sustained our interest more than its content.

The embellished *Adagio* has a particular charm which intrigues us more than any other part of the work, which may be occasioned by the fact that the pianist plays it so effectively. With music like this, however, the mood is very apt to change, another time it may well be the dramatic tension of the first movement.

The *Rondo*, on the sixth record face, is a delightfully refreshing bit of Mozart.

Dr. Wolff plays the *Sonata* and the *Rondo* with style and feeling. It cannot be said that his artistry lends itself to the most fluent type of Mozartean playing, but it can be said that it is in the best tradition of the Teutonic school. The recording here is very fine, and consistently realistic, and the record surfaces are among the best we have ever had from Musicraft.

—P. H. R.

HARP

RAMEAU: *Menuets de Platée*; and DURAND: *Chaconne*; played by Mildred Dilling, harpist. 10-inch Columbia disc, No. 17086-D, price \$1.00.

THIS month Miss Dilling's harp tinkles George Marty's transcription of two minuets from Act II of the opera *Platée ou Junon Jalouse*. The first has the pedal drone, or bourdon, of the old vielle. The music is utterly simple and transparent; the solo harp scarcely gives it enough substance.

Marie Auguste Durand was head of the great French music publishing firm of A. Durand et Fils. He was a composer and organist who studied at the Conservatoire along with Saint-Saens and Franck. The *Chaconne pour piano, Opus 62*, remains in Hasselmans' arrangement for harp, a graceful and pleasing *salon morceau*.

Slight extraneous sounds seem to have crept into the recording.

—A. P. D.

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ORGAN

BACH: *The Passion of Our Lord According to St. Matthew, Final*; played by Charles M. Courboin on the Grand Court Organ, Wanamaker's, Philadelphia. Victor 14321, price \$2.00.

THE total effect of Courboin's playing of Widor's transcription of the final double chorus of the *St. Matthew Passion* is not wholly satisfactory. What Bach wrote for double chorus and double orchestra cannot be transferred to the solo organ without a great loss. Even the best organ "strings" fail to replace the lightness and nuances of the orchestral strings, and there is a sense of incompleteness when we do not have the choruses to sing the words of the inexpressibly tender and spiritual chorale, *Wir setzen uns*.

That Courboin conveys as much as he does of the essence of the music is due to his unhurried tempo, to his taste in registration, and to the fine tone of the Wanamaker organ.

The sound engineers still have work ahead of them, for the organ does not yet come through naturally — it still has too much shrillness and strain, instead of resonance with brilliance.

—A. P. D.

NOVELTY

PIERNE: *Chanson de la grande maman*, and *La Veillée de l'ange gardien*; played by a Quartet of Saxophones (members of La Garde Républicaine). Columbia ten-inch disc, No. 281-M, price 75c.

HERE we have a distinct novelty. A quartet of saxophones playing serious if not heavy music is certainly unusual enough, and though I suspect that these two little pieces are not unfamiliar in France, where the recording was made, they will be new to most Americans. The disc will hardly add much to the glory of Pierné, for the music is pleasant rather than important, and I must confess that the tone of the saxophones is rather sweeter than my diet often allows.

La veillée de l'ange gardien (*The vigil of the guardian angel*) was written originally as No. 3 in a set of piano pieces called *Album pour mes petits amis*, published as Opus 14. It was also in this collection that

the familiar *Marche des petits soldats de plomb* made its appearance. The little piece demonstrates again that Pierné is essentially a composer for the ballet, though probably nothing was further from his thoughts while he was writing it. One can fairly see a sort of *Haensel und Gretel* dream pantomime when listening to this music. As a contribution to the literature of children's music it lacks the depths and understanding of such masterpieces as Fauré's *Dolly* or the Debussy *Children's Corner*.

La Chanson de la grand maman is No. 3 of the *Quinze pièces* which make up his Opus 3. Pierné evidently thought well of it, for he used it again later in his *Trois pièces pour orchestre formant Suite de concert*. In this second form it is scored for the quartet of strings. Transferring this arrangement to saxophones was simple enough, and if you don't tire of the sound of the instruments you will find it effective. There is nothing with which to reproach the performers or the recording engineers.

—P. M.

VOCAL

FLAGSTAD IN SONG: *Im Kahne*, Op. 69, No. 3 (Grieg); *Der gynger en Bat pa Bolge*, Op. 69, No. 1 (Grieg), disc 1813; *Ein Schwan*, Op. 25, No. 2 (Grieg); *Lys Nat*, Op. 70, No. 3 (Grieg), disc 1814; *Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur* (Beethoven); *Ich liebe dich* (Beethoven), disc 1815; *Lykken Mellem to Mennesker* (Alnaes); *Et Hab*, Op. 26, No. 1 (Grieg), disc 1816; *Lullaby* (Scott); *When I have sung my songs* (Charles), disc 1817. Kirsten Flagstad, soprano, with piano accompaniments by Edwin McArthur. Victor set M-342, ten-inch, price \$7.50.

IT is good to find the companies taking to the idea of releasing songs in albums. This set, which includes the best recordings yet to come from Mme. Flagstad, was not, of course, planned as such when the recordings were made in Europe last summer. This fact accounts for the musical unevenness of its contents. We should, however, be glad to have it as it is, for its merits outweigh its weaknesses. We might have wished for an all Grieg recital, but perhaps the success of this set may prompt Mme. Flagstad and the Victor Company to consider this idea for the future.

Mme. Flagstad has given ample proof by this time that she is of the elect few among opera singers who can give a wholly satisfying song recital. As we all know, it is in recital that an artist shows his real stature, and when a voice of the beauty and proportions of this one can be placed unreservedly at the service of a great song, the result is something to be treasured — to be recorded and kept.

Some years ago, when the Grieg vogue was at its height, it was the national quality of his music which people praised, for here was a new and individual note in the musical heritage of the world. Today it is this very nationalism, I believe, which has obscured the human and universal qualities of this truly great song-writer. His music has therefore fallen into undeserved disrepute, and we cannot be grateful enough to such an artist as Flagstad for bringing him among us again. Of the five Grieg songs here recorded two are well-known in this country, and these, for some reason, she has elected to sing in German translation instead of the original language. *Im Kahne* is a delightful song; *Ein Schwan* is a great one, and particularly in the latter Flagstad is at her best. Of the other three my favorite is the exquisite *Lys Nat*, which is done with a delicacy and finish quite irresistible. It is a song descriptive of a beautiful and all too short night. *Der Gynger en Bat pa Bolge* is a boat song, rather longer and more developed than the others and containing a variety of moods. *Et Hab* is an ecstatic song of hope.

Lykken Mellem to Mennesker seems to be a favorite with Mme. Flagstad, for she recorded it some years ago (before she had attained international celebrity) with the composer at the piano. Since then Alnaes has passed away, but Flagstad does her bit toward keeping his memory green by including a number of his songs on her programs. This one can stand in the company of the Grieg *Lieder*, and it suits the Flagstad voice to perfection. The new recording is fuller and more forward than the old one, and the singing is as magnificent as ever.

The two Beethoven songs are to my mind the best he ever wrote. In them, as in few of his vocal compositions, he found the secret of simplicity. Flagstad finds it too in the charming *Ich liebe dich*, making the most of the homely words of Herrosen. *Die Ehre Gottes* seems somehow to lack authority — perhaps it needs a large male voice.

But why the English songs? In all conscience she sings them beautifully — there are many fine points to admire — and her diction in our language should make most of our native vocalists hide their heads in shame. The Cyril Scott *Lullaby* is a pleasant trifle, to be sure, but hardly important enough to stand in its present company; and *When I have sung my songs* is just another banal American effusion. There are better English songs than these if we must finish the set in our tongue. Some of us may find ourselves using this last pocket for the previously released Flagstad recording of Grieg's *Ich liebe dich* and *Ein Traum*, which by rights belongs here. As a matter of fact, we understand this was the original intention when the album was planned.

Mr. McArthur's playing is that of the old school accompanist rather than the collaborator. He is always well with the soprano, but his part is generally rather colorless.

—P. M.



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PUCCINI: *La Boheme*, *Che Gelida Manina*; and LENOIR: *Parlez-Moi d'Amour*, sung by Michael Bartlett, with orchestra. Columbia 7341-M, price \$1.25.

THIS is our first recording by Michael Bartlett, who won much favorable comment in his film debut with Grace Moore in *Love Me Forever*. This tenor comes from Massachusetts, and is a graduate of Princeton. He studied singing with Campanari, and as Eduardo Bartelli sang opera in Rome, Turin and Milan. He appeared on Broadway in *Smiling Through* and *The School for Husbands*, in Philadelphia as Achilles in Gluck's *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and in road companies of *New Moon* and *The Cat and the Fiddle*.

This disc shows no remarkable gifts. The Boheme aria does not sound like real Italian opera; it is rhythmically stilted and altogether hum-drum. The voice is light and concentrated, but lacks body. *Parlez-Moi d'Amour* has a lush orchestral accompaniment, but makes little appeal. These are evidently not the proper selections for Mr. Bartlett.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

PUCCINI: *Tosca*, *Vissi d'Arte*, and VERDI: *La Traviata*, *Ah, fors e Lui*; sung by Helen Jepson, with orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. Victor 14184, price \$2.00.

THIS is definitely the most promising singing that Helen Jepson has done on records, and it is decidedly good. The voice is fresh and bright, and in certain soft phrases acquires a real mellowness.

Miss Jepson now shows us her talents and her youth, but not quite yet her full maturity. The singing is justifiably assured, but the feeling is at times tentative. Experience can still give a greater freedom in revealing a personal warmth and individuality. The *Tosca* air shows temperament, but would gain in effect if taken with a greater breadth. The *Traviata* is lyrical, with neat execution of the coloratura in the *Sempre Libera*.

The voice records well, and receives full but hardly sympathetic support from Mr. Smallens' orchestra.

—A. P. D.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Sadko*, *Hindoolied*; and GRECHANINOV: *Dobrynja Nikititsch*, *Aljoscha's Lied*; sung by the Don Cossacks' Choir. Columbia 7342-M, price \$1.25.

FRANKLY, neither side of this record gives much of an idea of the arias as they appear in the scores of the operas. In each case a tenor solo is given, not with its orchestral accompaniment, but adorned with a highly elaborated choral background. Serge Jaroff's Don Cossacks do about all that is humanly possible for voices to do in imitation of orchestral instruments. They produce an amazing variety of tonal colors. Their sharp accentuation and flexibility in handling the complexities of rhythm are uncanny. The soloist, not named on the label, has a penetrating, reedy voice.

Dobrynja Nikititsch is a *bulina* (national epic) opera that Grechaninov, pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov, completed in 1900. Our aria is Aljoscha's second song in Act 1. Aljoscha, pusillanimous and handsome, seeks to woo Nastia, while her husband is away fighting the dragon. Aljoscha's first song of allurements has repelled her. She approves of this second attempt, a song about the flowers growing in the spring until a cold frosty night destroys them, and about a bird singing melodiously until the strong loud storm winds blow.

The familiar *Song of India* needs no comment.

As an example of trick choral work, superlatively well done, we can recall no match for this record.

—A. P. D.

* * * *

WAGNER: *Meistersinger*, *Oui, C'Est Vous*, sung by Germaine Martinelli, and Georges Thill, and *L'Aube Vermeille Brillait*, sung by Thill, orchestra direction Eugene Bigot. Columbia 9125-M, price 31.50.

IN recent months Thill has earned and received our extravagant praise for his singing of French music in many styles, and on this record we find him every bit as good in Wagnerian opera. Wagner in French may not look like an attractive offering, but to be won over you need only listen to Thill. His style in Walther's music is just as Wagnerian as that of any German-born tenor, but

his smoothness of vocalism would be hard to equal among the tenors across the Rhine.

The *Prize Song* is sung with exuberance and youthful lustiness. The Act II duet starts at the words *Ja, ihr seid es*, near the beginning of the fifth scene. Eva has just rushed away from Magdalena to join Walther in the dark. He complains bitterly that he has no chance to win her hand since he failed dismally in his trial before the guild, and her father has decreed that the victor must be a mastersinger. She assures him that she will award him the winner's crown with her own hand. He begs her to flee with him this very night, but she refuses. They are interrupted by the Night-Watchman's approach. (The *Lebhaft* section of the scene, and Magdalena's words are omitted.)

The competent Paris soprano Germaine Martinelli joins Thill in an impetuous rendition of a first recording of this dramatic scene. Eugene Bigot conducts the unnamed orchestra. The recording is excellent.

—A. P. D.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the editor of *The American Music Lover*.

I chanced to see a copy of your magazine in the hands of an occasional contributor yesterday, and I noticed a letter, asking a question to which there is an answer. The reader wishes he could know in advance where to find good music on the air, and what and when.

"New York's only high fidelity station WQXR" provides both the music and the advance information. It is the only station I know about which publishes its programs, and it has thousands of annual subscribers to this monthly program at \$1, besides hundreds of thousands who call or send in for single copies at 10 cents. I received my May copy Thursday last. Doubtless you know the station. The New York Times gave a full third of its radio program comment space to it in one recent issue, more than to any single one of the four major stations. We listen to it more hours than to any other, and, with the advance programs, are able to plan our concert time.

Yours very truly,

R. P. Elliot.

New York City, May 1, 1937.

(We are happy to publish Mr. Elliot's letter. We have not included activities of WQXR (which by the way is not New York's only higher fidelity station since WOR also has a high frequency range), because only about 30 per cent of our readers would profit from the knowledge. As we spread out from coast to coast, we mainly list national programs. — *The Editor*.)

Swing Music Notes

By ENZO ARCHETTI

On May 2nd, the U. H. C. A., of New York, held another of its surprise jam sessions at the Master Records Recording Studios. This time the entire session was built around Frankie Newton and his orchestra and for almost two solid hours they proved themselves one of the finest swing groups in the city. Frankie Newton's trumpet work was outstanding, but he received solid support from everyone of his men, particularly from Cosy Cole on drums, Dick Fulbright on bass, and Fats Brown on alto. Fats was not present for the first part of the session but he sat in for the second half and more than made up for his absence by remaining long after the band had left and swinging it out as a duet with Don Frye on piano. The Newton group consisted of Frankie on trumpet, Russel Procop on alto, Charles Frazier (of Willie Bryant's Band) on tenor, Dick Fulbright on bass, John Smith on guitar, Cosy Cole on drums, and Don Frye on piano. Later Fats Brown, Slim Green (vocalist and guitarist), and Billy Kyle sat in for the jamming.

All in all the jam session was satisfying. It naturally did not outshine the previous one because the number and quality of the artists who sat in that time were really remarkable but Frankie Newton and his boys proved that they deserved to rank among the best. For corroboration all that is needed is to listen to their new Variety records.

The jam session was not well attended owing not so much to any lack of interest on the part of the U. H. C. A. members as to the inconvenient hour. Two o'clock on a Sunday afternoon is still early morning to most New Yorkers. This is a point the U. H. C. A. officials should keep in mind next time.

The occasion of this jam session was taken to announce some important changes in the organization of the U. H. C. A. The constant criticism against the laxity of the officials in the administration of club affairs, in these pages and elsewhere, has finally borne fruit. The U. H. C. A. is being reorganized, and arrangements are being made to incorporate it, in order to facilitate a closer cooperation with the other branches in the country and to extend its activities across state border lines. John Hammond has resigned as its active president and Marshall W. Stearns has been appointed to succeed him. Milton Gabler is the secretary and Helen M. Oakley the business manager. Permanent headquarters have been established at 797 Seventh Avenue. Regular jam sessions will be held each month (except during July and August), probably on the first Sunday, for members only, to which will be invited the finest swing artists available at the time. Special records sponsored by the Club will be waxed with the cooperation of Master Records, Inc., and Irving Mills, who has offered his backing that the Club may become an efficient organization. A monthly bulletin called *The Beacon* has been created which will be sent to all members.

It will be the Club's official journal and it will contain notes and news on artists, orchestras, and recordings as well as reviews of important new records, and articles on swing music in general.

This is the ambitious program of the new U. H. C. A. With such efficient and enthusiastic people to guide it as Stearns, Helen Oakley and Gabler, there is no reason why it should not succeed and become the vital force in swing music it should be.

A *Hot Record Society* has been created with offices at 303 Fifth Avenue, for the purpose of re-issuing rare hot records which have long been out of print. In plant, this Society parallels the eminently successful I. R. C. C., created by Seltsam some years ago and which has done splendid work in rescuing rare, outstanding operatic discs from complete oblivion. The H. R. S. differs from the I. R. C. C. in that the records are offered to members of the Society only, on a subscription basis. The plan is to issue six records a year at \$1.00 each, of which each member must buy at least four. At intervals "record dividends" will be declared. The records chosen for repressing are passed upon by an advisory board consisting of many well known names in the hot record field: John Hammond, George Frazier, Marshall Stearns, Wilder Hobson, Warren Scholl, Hugues Panassie, Charles Delauney, and ten others.

The first issue of the Society has already been released. It consists of the two recordings (different masters) of the *Chicago Looper's* version of *Three Blind Mice* which has originally appeared under the Perfect label but has long since been a collector's item. The *Chicago Looper's* were a recording group consisting of Bix Beiderbecke, Frankie Trumbauer, Carl Kress, Don Murray, Arthur Schutt, and Vic Berton.

The plans of the H. R. S. are laudable. It deserves success and the support of all hot record fans who are genuinely interested in the "classic" hot recordings.

Those who have followed Bunny Berigan's variegated career since his University of Wisconsin days when he first began to show signs of unusual talent through his many associations with famous orchestras, had some misgivings when he left the Saturday Night Swing Club, the program on WABC which had been built around him, to form an orchestra of his own. His first venture as Bunny Berigan and his Orchestra at the Meadowbrook in New Jersey was successful. Not brilliantly successful, however. Bunny as a soloist, far outshone any member of his band or the group as a whole. The personnel of the band at that time was H. Greenwald, and H. Brown on trumpets besides Bunny himself; H. Scheitzer, M. Matlock, and A. Dollinger, saxes; Ford Leary, trombone; Tom Morganeli, guitar; Leo Burness, piano; Arnold Fishkin, bass, and Manny Berger, drums. This is the make-up of the band which made the Brunswick records issued during the last few months.

After the Meadowbrook engagement the band toured New England. During this period little was heard of it until it suddenly blossomed forth again in New York with a new personnel to fill the recently vacated spot at the Manhattan Room at the Hotel Pennsylvania, a commercial program on the air on Station WOR, and a Victor recording contract. This is probably the first time in the history of jazz that an orchestra so young in experience has placed itself in the front rank with first class or-

chestras in so short a time. And it thoroughly deserves the distinction. Bunny, himself, is as great as ever. The finest swing soloists of today can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and Bunny is one of those fingers. Now, he has gathered around him a group of men who, though young and unknown (with the exception of one player) are completely in sympathy with his style and ideas. Bunny now surely has one of the finest swing orchestras playing today. One has merely to tune in on his commercial on WOR, Saturday nights, at 6:30; or his various broadcasts from the Pennsylvania late at night, during the week; or his new Victor records, to be convinced of this. The personnel of the band is now: Bunny Berigan, Steve Lipkins, and Cliff Natale, trumpets; George Auld and Clyde Rounds, tenor saxes; Henry Freeman and Gene Kinsye, alto saxes; Ford Leary and Frank D'Annolfo, trombones; George Wettling, drums; Joseph Lippman, piano; Arnold Fishkin, bass; Tom Morganeli, guitar; and Carol MacKay, vocalist. Sue Mitchell may replace Carol MacKay shortly.

On June 12th, the Saturday Night Swing Club will celebrate its first anniversary with a gala one hour swing concert beginning at midnight and broadcast over the entire network of 101 stations of the Columbia Broadcasting System. The program will be a review of the year in swing, presenting the soloists, discoveries, new compositions, and orchestras aired on the Saturday Night Swing Club. Well known orchestra leaders will be invited to act as guest conductors for individual members and leading swing bands will be picked up by remote control and rebroadcast, including the famous Hot Club Quintet from Paris. The program will emanate from the Columbia Playhouse No. 1, in New York, to which will be invited a select audience.

This will be an interesting and unusual program inasmuch as it will be the anniversary of the first program on the air devoted exclusively to swing — and, at that, a program which was begun when the critics were already bemoaning the death of swing.

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Record Collector's Corner

By JULIAN MORTON MOSES

THIS column marks the end of the first year of our *Record Collector's Corner*. Different, indeed, is the aspect presented us by what appeared a much more desolate field on July 1, 1936. On that date, my book, *The Record Collector's Guide*, emerged onto a world of dubious size in a form as unimpressive as it seemed untidy. Omissions were occasional and typographical errors rampant. Yet, finding a linotypist to even tackle the almost unbroken succession of foreign titles had been so difficult, I did not dare to criticize the result.

Surely, I thought, this thing will never bring back the amount that was sunk into it. There aren't enough collectors in the country and those there are will not spend even one dollar for it. I was wrong on both counts. Likewise was I mistaken in thinking that music and record critics, not to mention those concerned with the book trade, would ignore it or at best only give it passing attention. While I did not exactly achieve immortality, the extreme kindness of so many periodicals left me thoroughly gratified and everlastingly grateful.

So much for *The Record Collector's Guide*. My next book, when it appears, will be fortunate if it is half as well received. Other forces have served to bring this formerly clandestine hobby to a position of far greater prominence. They include several firms devoted to procuring and selling old discs and cylinders (used records were formerly taboo) as many auction sheets accomplishing the same results in a more subtle way and, most recently, another society for sponsoring repressings added to the one already existing. Rumor has it that a major phonograph company is considering the issuance of its own historical catalogue but, as yet, this can be definitely put down as only rumor.

While opinion seems the contrary in a small discontented circle, all this activity

strikes us as being a healthy sign and calculated to make collecting an easier, more rational and less expensive pursuit for those with great sincerity but limited time to devote to it. Perhaps it has brought to an end the merry days of securing ten Grand Prize Victors for one cent (though this was already a thing of the past). It has also made it a little more difficult for unscrupulous persons to continue charging exorbitant prices for things of falsely inflated value. As we now stand, the worth of any rare record can be pretty well determined and explained to the layman but the amount it will bring is a matter of extreme speculation. By next summer, this too may have been remedied.

"Can it be", a collector writes, "that we have some of those little companies which I have always so envied the Europeans? It seems to me dreadfully provincial to limit our interests so much to the domestic pressings of the Victor and Columbia companies." Collecting habits always grow from the present backwards and we are at last approaching the mysterious and elusive incunabula of our field. Herein we find so complete a lack of information that it is almost amusing to reflect on the number of whole companies that were formed with the aid of inventors, business men and lawyers, operated by employing musicians, laborers and salesmen, and left not a thread of evidence of just what all these people accomplished with their time.

Anyone desiring to chart his course would do well to follow the wanderings of FERUCCIO GIANNINI, tenor and progenitor of a most distinguished brood. The name of this estimable gentleman appears from places as remote (for their time) as Washington, D. C. (Berliner records), Philadelphia, Pa. (Rex records), Williamsport, Pa. (Ryskell records), Camden, N. J. (Monarch records),

and New York, N. Y. and its environs (Zonophone, Columbia and National Gramophone records). This last company, then located at 874 Broadway, listed over twenty-five of his solos on its black flush label. The operatic selections include:

Cavalleria Rusticana, Siciliana, No. 902; *Il Trovatore, Di quella pira*, No. 903; *Lucia, Fra poco a me ricovero* No. 923; *Cavalleria Rusticana, Brindisi* No. 932; *Il Trovatore, Deserto sulla terra*, No. 981; *Il Trovatore, Mal reggendo*, No. 984

some of which he did not record for other companies.

However, we have nothing even to approach the May 1903 Zonophone lists with such names as CARUSO, CALVE, PLANCON, KURZ, SLEZAK, DELMAS, BERNHARDT, COQUELIN and SALVINI. These are discs worth the imbibing of millions of varied bacteria. For European cylinders of this period, we must turn to the Pathe company which had already recorded ADAMS, BORONAT, BISPHAM, CARUSO, LASALLE, SANTLEY and VAN ROOY among others. Find these if you will and we'll tell the world for you.

GLUCK, *Orfeo ed Euridice, J'ai perdu mon Euridice*, and DEBUSSY: *L'Enfant Prodigue, Air de Lia*, sung by Jeanne Gerville-Reache, with orchestra. The Historic Record Society No. 1004, twelve-inch disc, price \$2.25.

IN our April article on Gerville-Reache, we mentioned this to be the best recorded version of Lia's poignant air. Nothing has come forth in the last two months to dispute this statement as nothing had in the twenty-six years since the original record was released. Coupled with an Orfeo sung with sweep and power and opulent high notes, it makes an ideal disc and should be in every collection.

* * * *

DONIZETTI: *Lucrezia Borgia, Di pescatore ignobile*, sung by Carlo Albani, with orchestra and BELLINI: *I Puritani, Suoni la tromba*; sung by Mario Ancona and Marcel Journet, with orchestra. The Historic Record Society, No. 1003, twelve-inch disc, price \$2.25.

THIS record did not reach us in time for review. The two sides date from 1908

and 1907 respectively and were cut out a few years later, the second to make way for the same duet sung by Amato and Journet.

* * * *

CHAMINADE: *L'Eté*; and "Queen Ann in Prison" (attributed to her), sung by Blanche Marchesi, with orchestra and piano respectively. International Record Collectors' Club No. 97, 10-inch disc (autographed), price \$2.00.

ASIDE from its seasonal appropriateness, the Chaminade song is a delightful coloratura piece. It was recorded in Berlin in 1906, put on sale July of that year and supposedly withdrawn owing to the jealousy of Nellie Melba (though I have seen it still listed at a much later date). Be that as it may, the singer was 43 years old at the time, a famous pupil of her much more famous mother. She does a smooth and vivacious job and does not suffer through re-recording. When she brought her musicianship and voice thirty years older to the recording on September 23, 1936 of a dubiously royal lament, she was faced with a much easier task and finishes quite successfully though the age shows in spots. She is an intelligent artist but no female Battistini.

* * * *

GOUNOD: *Romeo et Juliette, Valse*; and STERN: *Coquette*, sung by Suzanne Adams with piano. International Record Collectors' Club No. 98, ten-inch disc, price \$2.25.

THIS re-recording of Adams' rare 1902 G&T items did not reach us in time for review.

FROMAN AND ROSS ON JELL-O PROGRAM

Jane Froman, singing star of radio, stage and screen, and her husband, Don Ross, will headline the Jell-O Summer show while Jack Benny and Mary Livingston go on a three-months vacation. The programs will continue to be broadcast over the NBC-Red Network, Sundays at 7:00 p. m., EDST. July 4 is the opening day of the warm-weather series.

Hailed as one of the air's foremost interpreters of popular music, Miss Froman's Broadway and film activities have prevented her from accepting long-term radio engagements during the past year and a half. However, she has made a number of guest appearances on leading NBC variety programs.

In the Popular Vein

By HORACE VAN NORMAN

BALLROOM DANCE

AAAA—*Twenty Minutes with Kostelanetz: Mary Had a Little Lamb, and Goodnight, Ladies.* Brunswick 7873. *Adios Muchachos, and Yira! Yira!* Brunswick 7874. *My Sombrero and Cubanacan.* Brunswick 7875. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. Price, complete with album, \$3.00.

If one is willing to grant that the very notion of symphonic jazz has any validity whatever, then Kostelanetz is surely one of the most thoroughly significant figures in American music. No one, certainly not Whiteman, has approached Kostelanetz in the success with which he has grafted the refinements and complexities of contemporary symphonic orchestration onto the sturdy growth that is jazz. No one has dreamed of the superb virtuosity that this Russian immigrant has been able to bring to the playing of popular music on the air. Call it a bastard art if you will, it still remains the most compelling trend in recent years and the one which is likely to have the most far-reaching effects on our native music. There is nothing new about swing as nearly everyone has discovered by now. But there is something strikingly new about Kostelanetz' conception of jazz, even though it be as far removed from the dives of Fifty-second Street and its feckless "swingsters" as anything possibly could be.

Whether one be a devotee of the luxuriant stuff that "Kosty" dispenses or not, however, there cannot but be disappointment at the selections chosen for this album (and a very handsome red album it is, too). Highly intricate arrangements of Mother Goose songs are, at their best, sheer cleverness and at their worst are incredible banality. Needless to say, there are done with superlative cleverness, and yet they leave you with a rather empty feeling. The tangoes and rhumbas, however, are very much better. Here Kostelanetz calls into play all the resources of his amazing orchestra, (probably the most thoroughly brilliant aggregation of instrumentalists ever gathered together under one baton in this country) and the results are frequently breathtaking.

* * * *

AAA—*Shall We Dance, and For You.* Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. Victor 25552.

Again Ol' Massa Paul shows the boys that when it comes to a perfectly straightforward commercial job, he can do a little better at it than any one else in the business. Whiteman's version of *Shall We Dance* has wit and grace while the ambitious and

vigorous Green's, reviewed here last month, was simply clever. And there is always the possibility, on any Whiteman recording, that those two zanies Trumbauer and Jack Teagarden will burst into some of their incomparable solo work, as they do here. And this is a blessing, since hot virtuosi who play with musicianship as well as skill are rare, even in these days of the efflorescence of the swingster and the jammer.



"Ol Massa Paul"

AA—*The You and Me That Used to Be, and When Two Love Each Other.* Eddie Duchin and his Orchestra. Victor 25576.

There is always something irresistibly comic about Duchin when he attempts to play a rhythm tune, such as the first one. Where other bands, even mediocre ones, take a tune like this in their stride, Duchin immediately gets hot under the collar, the whole band tenses up and the boys jerk along with all the grace of your Grandaunt Hattie doing the Lindy Hop. The other side is the smooth-as-glass type of tune (and apparently the only type that Duchin can play) and all goes well, as it usually does.

AA—*There's a Lull In My Life*, and *Carelessly*. Kay Thompson and her Orchestra (with her Rhythm Singers). Victor 25564.

There is something insistently annoying (annoyingly insistent, too) about Kay and the gals, here. Somehow, one is driven inescapably to the conclusion that Miss Thompson does not suffer from an excessive quantity of false modesty, which is all to the good, of course. Only it shouldn't be too glaringly apparent in one's work, or am I an old fogey?

HOT JAZZ

AAAA—*Buzzin' 'Round With the Bee*, and *Whoa Babe*. Lionel Hampton and his Orchestra. Victor 25575.

Take the best men in Ellington's band, combine them with some of the best men in Goodman's band, and you have a right to expect fine things. And that is precisely what you get here. Apparently the discipline received in such magnificent organizations has a salutary effect that is not noticeably evident in the work of the more furious individualists among the swingers. For these are exceptionally well integrated performances, and grand solos by Hampton, Cootie Williams, Lawrence Brown and, last but far from least, Johnny Hodge, who has always seemed to us one of the most under-rated boys in the business. Now that the Duke has settled down for a spell and the cosmopolites have a chance to realize once more what a great bunch he has got together, and with Hodge's more frequent appearances on all-star groups such as this one, he will surely come into the high favor which is rightfully his. There is, and always has been, something a little uncanny about the smooth perfection of his work, and he has never been heard to better advantage than here.

* * * *

AAAA—*Alibi Baby*, and *He's a Gypsy from Poughkeepsie*. Tommy Dorsey and his Clam Bake Seven. Victor 25577.

With the fairly recent addition to his menage of Pee-wee Irwin and Johnny Mince, Dorsey is able to hold his head up with the best of them, not excluding Benny the Great. Here are lusty performances, with all hands doing themselves proud, even Bud Freeman, who is far from being this department's favorite tenor man. Why anyone should deliberately play out of tune when people spend the ten best years of their lives trying to learn to play in tune is beyond me. Well, Freeman and the great handsomen he has played under know best, I suppose, but I still think his work would improve a hundred percent if he'd tune up with the rest of the band.

* * * *

AAA—*Nola*, and *Satan Takes a Holiday*. Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Vivtor 25570.

More top-notch items from Dorsey, this time with the full ensemble. His treatment of *Nola* is just

what you wouldn't expect it to be, which is just fine. He takes it exactly one half as fast as you ever heard it played before, and very wittily, too. As for *Satan Takes a Holiday*, it's very alright also, except that if the musical plagiarism laws had any teeth in them, the writers of *Stop, Look and Listen* would have a darned good case against whoever is responsible for what might be called its composition.

* * * *

AA—*Powerhouse*, and *The Toy Trumpet*. The Raymond Scott Quintette. Master MA-111.

The more we hear of the Raymond Scott Quintette the more we are convinced that they are boob-snatchers of the first order. Ourselves taken in pretty completely at the very start, we find that their rather bizarre creations don't wear very well. Their nicely calculated tricks are the very antithesis of real swing and you can no more bear to repeat them indefinitely than you could bear to hear the same wise-crack, no matter how sidesplitting, repeated ad infinitum. In fact, we're beginning to think that their chief value lies in the striking contrast they afford to those groups whose work has at least a slight emotional basis.

EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 41)

that the tour was a success should stimulate other leading commercial organizations to back more of our leading artistic groups. Good music is a sound commercial investment, and this we know the sponsors of the Philadelphia tour will confirm. If only we had more commercial organizations in this country which would as diligently and unselfishly sponsor good music as has RCA in the past two years, we believe that America would in a very short time become not only the most musical nation in the world but the most musical nation that ever existed.

Not only would this lift the status of musical appreciation in America, but it would also, we believe, result in greater musical creation in this country. Much of the best in musical creation in the past can be traced to the sponsorship of moneyed interests, for the urge to create is not only stimulated but greatly strengthened by the assurance that the individual is working for a definite rather than an indefinite purpose. No one, no matter how talented, wants to create music which lies unperformed.



Radio Notes

NBC HOME SYMPHONY

Ernest LaPrade will conduct the NBC Home Symphony in two broadcasts in June, after which this series will be discontinued for the summer.

The program of June 5 will open with Moussorgsky's *Cossack Dance*. The second movement from Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* and the fourth movement from Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1* will complete the program.

The program of June 12 will comprise Tchaikowsky's *Marche Slav*, Weber's *Concertino*, and Gliere's *Russian Sailor's Dance*.

These concerts are heard on Saturdays from 6:35 to 7:00 P. M., EDST, over the NBC-Blue network.

TRUDY WOOD IN SUMMER SERIES

Trudy Wood, versatile young California soprano, has been engaged as featured vocalist with Johnny Green and his orchestra in the new musical series that will replace the Fred Astaire-Charlie Butterworth programs for the Summer on the NBC-Red Network, Tuesday at 9:30 p. m., EDST, beginning June 8.

FORD SUMMER SERIES

Concluding the current 39-week Ford Sunday Evening Hour series, presenting the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and distinguished guest soloists, the final program will be broadcast over a nationwide WABC-Columbia network Sunday, June 13, from 9:00 to 10:00 P. M., EDST, in accordance with its usual custom of going off the air for the summer months.

Weekly thereafter, at the same time, during the summer an augmented "Universal Rhythm" program, currently broadcast on Saturday nights, will replace the "Sunday Evening Hour."

Following a pattern similar to the present series, "Universal Rhythm," in being extended to a full hour, will continue to star Richard Bonelli, Metropolitan Opera baritone; Alec Templeton, blind English pianist; Carolyn Urbaneck, soprano, and Rex Chandler's orchestra, with the addition of a chorus and guest stars.

The programs will continue under the sponsorship of the Ford Dealers of America.

MICROPHONE NO LIMIT SAYS JANSSEN

Werner Janssen, famous American conductor, who is directing his first commercial radio program in America on NBC, refuses to believe that radio offers limitations to music.

Declaring that music can be successfully interpreted over the microphone as it can be in the concert hall, Janssen told Hollywood newspapermen that he hopes to demonstrate this during the variety series starring Don Ameche with Edgar Bergen and W. C. Fields.

"What do you think is the ideal size orchestra for radio?" he was asked.

"I think mine is," Janssen replied. He uses thirty-six pieces.

"By proper placement of the microphone, a few violins, for example can be made to produce the same tone as many of them," he said.

Janssen disclosed that he plans to conduct with the aid of earphones so he may hear his music exactly as it sounds to the listener.

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- Sundays—
9:30 P.M.—American Album of Familiar Music
- Mondays—
8:30 P.M.—Voice of Firestone
10:30 P.M.—Music for Moderns
- Wednesdays—
2:30 P.M.—Choir Symphonette
- Thursdays—
2:00 P.M.—NBC Music Guild
- Fridays—
2:30 P.M.—Concert Miniature
8:00 P.M.—Cities Service Concert
- Saturdays—
3:00 P.M.—Musicale
8:00 P.M.—NBC Jamboree

(Blue Network)

- Sundays—
7:00 P.M.—Helen Traubel, soprano
8:00 P.M.—General Motors Prom. Concert
- Tuesdays—
2:30 P.M.—Music Guild
- Wednesdays—
9:00 P.M.—Frank Black's String Symphony
- Thursdays—
3:00 P.M.—NBC-Light Opera Company
8:30 P.M.—Boston Pops Concerts
- Fridays—
9:30 P.M.—Coronet-on-the-air
- Saturdays—
10:00 P.M.—Concert Party

NBC-STRING ORCHESTRA PROGRAMS FOR JUNE

Frank Black, Conductor

June 9

Mozart: *Sonata No. 4 for Piano* (Transcribed by Mr. Black.

Paul Juon: *Five Pieces for String Orchestra*.

Paul Graener: *Sinfonietta*.

Bela-Bartok: *Roumanian Dances*.

June 16

Lully (arr. Weingartner): *Concerto for String Orchestra*.

Erik-Larsen: *Sinfonietta*.

Brahms-Hermann: *Der Liebeslieder Waltzes*.

COLUMBIA HIGHLIGHTS FOR JUNE (Eastern Daylight Saving Time)

- Sundays—
12:30 P.M.—Salt Lake City Tabernacle
3:00 P.M.—Everybody's Music — Barlow and Symphony Orchestra
- Mondays—
3:00 P.M.—Clyde Barrie, Negro baritone
3:30 P.M.—Pops Concert — Howard Barlow
- Tuesdays—
3:30 P.M.—Columbia Concert Hall
- Wednesdays—
9:00 P.M.—Lily Pons and Kostalanetz Orchestra
9:30 P.M.—Jessica Dragonette — Chas. Coleman
- Thursdays—
6:15 P.M.—Clyde Barrie, baritone, with concert orchestra
- Fridays—
3:00 P.M.—Kreiner String Quartet in Mozart Cycle
10:00 P.M.—Ferde Grofe, starting June 4, inaugurates a novel new summer musical series with symphony orchestra and choral group.
- Saturdays—
11:30 A.M.—Columbia Concert Hall
3:45 P.M.—Clyde Barrie, baritone
6:00 P.M.—Robert Schmitz, pianist
9:00 P.M.—Grace Moore and Vincent Lopez's Orchestra

June 23

Bach-Schroeder: *Overture Suite*.

Torelli: *Sinfonietta*.

And other music.

June 30

Unannounced.

* * * *

Ben Grauer, announcer on the Magic Key of RCA program, went to Philadelphia this month to handle a Philadelphia Orchestra program. While there he met an old friend, Herbert Austin. With Austin was a charming young woman. Turning to others present, Grauer introduced "Mr. and Mrs. Austin." The two acknowledged the introductions without batting an eye. Grauer presented an extremely red face a few minutes later when Austin, drawing a tiny box from his pocket and opening it to display a wedding ring, said, "Ben, you are just four weeks ahead of us; it's to be announced next week!"

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MOZART: String Quartet in E flat, K-171, played by Kreiner Quartet. Discs 3 and 4.

GRIFFES: *An Indian Sketch*, Kreiner Quartet, and *The Lament of Ian the Proud*, William Hain, tenor, with Jerome T. Bohm at piano. Disc 5.

JOSEPH MARX: *Lieder, In meinen Traueme Heimat*, and *Der Rauch*; sung by Paul Engel, baritone, with Mr. Bohm at piano. Disc 6.

SCRIABINE: *Fourth Sonata*; Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 7.

ARIOSTI: *Cantata for Voice, Viola d'Amore and Piano*. Lucile Dresskell, soprano; Miles Dresskell, viola d'amore; Sara Knight, piano. Disc 8.

SCHOENBERG: *Klavierstueck, Opus 11, No. 2*, and **SCRIABINE:** *Flammes Sombres, Opus 73*. Katherine Ruth Heyman. Disc 9.

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